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**NOTES,**  
**EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL,**  
**ON**  
**THE GOSPELS:**

**DESIGNED FOR**  
**SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS AND BIBLE CLASSES.**

**BY**  
**REV. ALBERT BARNES.**

**CAREFULLY REVISED BY**  
**REV. SAMUEL GREEN,**  
**AUTHOR OF THE "BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY."**

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## PREFACE.

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IN the preparation of the following Notes, free use has been made of all the helps within the reach of the author. The works from which most assistance has been derived are, Walton's Polyglott; the Critici Sacri, particularly the notes of Grotius; Lightfoot's Works; Macknight and Newcome's Harmony of the Gospels; Jahn's Archaeology; Horne's Introduction; Doddridge's Family Expositor; Calmet's Dictionary; Campbell on the Gospels; the Commentaries of Kuinoel, Rosenmüller, Clarke, and Henry; Tittman's Meletemata Sacra on John; the Sacred Geography of Wells, and that prepared for the American Sunday-School Union, by Messrs. J. and J. W. Alexander. The object has been to express, in as few words as possible, the real meaning of the gospels:—the results of a critical study of them, rather than the process by which these results were reached.

This work is designed to occupy a place, which is supposed to be unappropriated, in attempts to explain the New Testament. It was my wish to present to Sunday-school teachers a plain and simple explanation of the more common difficulties of the book which it is their province to teach. This wish has given character to the work. If it should occur to any one that more minute explanations of words, phrases, and customs, have been attempted than might seem to them desirable, it will be recollected that many Sunday-school teachers have little access to means of information, and that no small part of their



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success is dependent on the minuteness and correctness of the explanation which is given to children.

This work is designed also to be a *Harmony of the Gospels*. Particular attention has been bestowed, especially in the Notes on Matthew, to bring the different narratives of the evangelists together, and to show that, in their narration of the same events there is no real contradiction. It will be recollected that the sacred narrative of an event is what it is reported to be by all the evangelists. It will also be recollected that the most plausible objections to the New Testament have been drawn from the apparent contradictions in the gospels. The importance of meeting these difficulties, in the education of the young, and of showing that these objections are not well founded, will be apparent to all.

Particular attention has been paid to the references to parallel passages of scripture which in all instances, in these Notes, are an essential part of the explanation of the text.\*

\* In the American edition it has happened, from causes which need not be explained here, that many of these references are incorrect, so far losing the value which the excellent author attributed to them. English editions of the work, though correcting many of the errors in the American, have still left uncorrected so many as considerably to impair the value of the Editorial labour bestowed on these editions. As a specimen I may mention pages 14 and 15 of a quarto edition of the New Testament and Notes; vol. i. published in 1848. In these two pages four errors have been left uncorrected by the worthy editor. The notes on Matt. iii. 12, refer to Hos. xiii. 13; it should be Hos. xiii. 3. The notes on ver. 16, refer to Ps. lv. 7; it should be Ps. lv. 6. The last paragraph in the notes on chap. iii. contains a reference to Isa. ix. 8; it should be Isa. ix. 6. The notes on Matt. iv. 1, refer to 1 Tim. iii. 2; it should be 1 Tim. iii. 11. These are instances taken at random. In other pages, instances even worse than these might have been selected for illustration; and that they are not mere misprints which escaped the vigilance of the editor is evident from their appearing also in a smaller edition brought out under the superintendence of the same editor. Another edition published, as the Title page indicates, 1850, also smaller and in two volumes, is the most correct, though even this is somewhat frequently at fault. It is exceedingly difficult to secure entire correctness in matters of this kind, and I will not affirm that I have succeeded; it has, however, been my aim to succeed. I think also it will be perceived that the present edition of the notes is an improvement on former editions from

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The authority of the Bible has been deemed the only authority that was necessary in such cases; and it is hoped that no one will condemn any explanation offered, without a candid examination of the real meaning of the passages referred to.

The main design of these Notes will be accomplished, if they furnish a just explanation of the text. Practical remarks could not have been more full without materially increasing the size of the book, and, as was supposed, without essentially limiting its circulation and its usefulness. All that has been attempted, therefore, in this part of the work, has been to furnish leading thoughts, or heads of practical remark, to be enlarged on at the discretion of the teacher.

These Notes have been prepared amidst the pressing and anxious cares of a responsible pastoral charge. Of their imperfections no one can be more sensible than the author. Of the time and patience indispensable in preparing even such brief Notes on the Bible, under the conviction that the opinions expressed may form the sentiments of the young on subjects set forth in the Book of God, and determine their eternal destiny, no one can be sensible who has not made the experiment. The great truth is becoming more and more impressed on the minds of this generation, that the Bible is the only authoritative source of religious belief; and if there is any institution pre-eminently calculated to deepen this impression, and fix it permanently in the minds of the coming

the introduction of several references, chiefly marginal, which the author did not give, and which his English editors have not attempted.

This may be an appropriate place also for saying that, inasmuch as the American Sunday School Union Dictionary can be known to but very few English readers of the following work, the references to that compilation have been exchanged in most cases for references to works equally excellent to which English Sunday-school teachers have readier access. Both the English editions above alluded to retain the original references. Here and there an Americanism is corrected, and money is reduced, not to American coins, as with the author, but to English.

SAMUEL GREEN, EDITOR.

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age, it is the Sunday-school. Every minister of the gospel, every parent, every Christian, must therefore feel it important that just views of interpretation should be imbibed in these schools. I have felt more deeply than any other sentiment, the importance of inculcating on the young, proper modes of explaining the sacred scriptures. If I can be one of the instruments, however humble, in extending such views through the community, my wish in this work will be accomplished. I commit it, therefore, to the blessing of the God of the Bible, with the prayer that it may be one among many instruments of forming correct religious views, and promoting the practical love of God and man, among the youth of this country.

ALBERT BARNES.

PHILADELPHIA, *August 25th, 1832.*

## EXTRACTS FROM THE PREFACE

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### THE SEVENTEENTH EDITION.

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THE first edition of these Notes on the Gospels was published in the year 1832. Since that time sixteen editions, of two thousand each, have been sold, making thirty-two thousand copies, or sixty-four thousand volumes. I need not say that so extensive a sale has greatly surpassed any expectations which I had formed, and that the favour of the public thus shown has laid me under the strongest obligations of gratitude. It has demonstrated what I deeply felt when the work was composed, that such a plain exposition of the Gospels was needed by the public, and particularly that the cause of Sabbath-school instruction required it.

[Circumstances led to a revision of the work for the present edition, and the author adds—] I have found that in many places there were redundant words; that some were obscure in their meaning; that some had been printed erroneously at first; that in some instances there was need of additional explanations; and that there were some parts contradicting others. These errors I have endeavoured to correct. Some places have been considerably enlarged. As the work on the Gospels is complete in itself, I have added at the close of the second volume such *tables* as I supposed would be useful to the teachers in Sabbath-schools. In particular, the *chronological table*, and the *index*, have cost me much labour, and I trust will be found to be useful.

The essential character and form of the work have not been changed. I could easily have made it larger, and could have furnished many additional illustrations; but I supposed that the christian public had expressed its approbation of the general form and style of the work in such a manner as to make a material deviation from either improper. In revising the work, I have made some references to other parts of my writings on the New Testament, where a subject is more fully discussed. In a few places I have also made a reference to my Notes on Isaiah. Some who may possess the Notes on the Gospels, may also possess that work. To such these references will be valuable, though not absolutely *necessary* to an understanding of these Notes on the Gospels.

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It is not probable that I shall live to see the present set of plates worn out, or to make another revision of these volumes necessary. I dismiss them, therefore, finally, with deep feeling; feeling more deep by far than when I first submitted them to the press. I cannot be insensible to the fact that I have been, by my expositions of the New Testament, doing something—and it may be much—to mould the hearts and intellects of thousands of the rising generation in regard to the great doctrines and duties of religion—thousands who are to act their parts, and develop these principles, when I am dead. Nor can I be insensible to the fact that in the form in which these volumes now go forth to the public, I may continue, though dead, to speak to the living; and that the work may be exerting an influence on immortal minds when I am in the eternal world. I need not say, that while I am sensitive to this consideration, I earnestly desire it. There are no sentiments in these volumes which I wish to alter; none that I do not believe to be truth that will abide the investigations of the great day; none of which I am ashamed. That I *may* be in error, I know; that a better work than this might be prepared by a more gifted mind and a better heart, I know. But the truths here set forth are, I am persuaded, those which are destined to abide, and to be the means of saving millions of souls, and of ultimately converting this whole world to God. That these volumes may have a part in this great work, is my earnest prayer;—and with many thanks to the public for their favours, and to God, the great Source of all blessings, I send them forth again—commending them to *His* care, and asking in a special manner the continued favour of Sabbath-school teachers and of the young.

ALBERT BARNES.

Washington Square, Philadelphia,  
September 11, 1840.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE writings which are regarded by Christians as the sole standard of faith and practice have been designated at various periods by different names. They are frequently called *The Scriptures*, to denote that they are the most important of all writings ;—*The Holy Scriptures*, because composed by persons divinely inspired, and containing sacred truth ;—and *The Canonical Scriptures*. The word canon means a rule, and it was applied by the christian fathers to the books of the Bible because they were regarded as an authoritative rule of faith and practice ; and also to distinguish them from certain spurious or apocryphal books, which, although some of them might be true as matter of history, or correct in doctrine, were not regarded as a rule of faith, and were therefore considered as not canonical.

But the most common appellation given now to these writings is THE BIBLE. This is a Greek word signifying book. It is given to the scriptures by way of eminence, to denote that this is the Book of books, as being infinitely superior to every unassisted production of the human mind. In the same way, the name *Koran* or *reading* is given to the writings of Mohammed, denoting that they are the chief writings to be read, or eminently The reading.

The most common and general division of the Bible is into the Old and New Testaments. The word testament with us means a will ; an instrument in writing, by which a person declares his will in relation to his property after his death. This is not, however, its meaning when applied to the scriptures. It is taken from the Greek translation of the Hebrew word meaning covenant, compact, or agreement. The word is applied to the covenant or compact which God made with the Jews to be their God, and thus primarily denotes the agreement, the compact, the promises, the institutions, of the old dispensation, and then the record of that compact in the writings of Moses and the Prophets. The name "Old Testament," or "Old Covenant," therefore, denotes the books containing the records of God's compact with his *people*, or his dispensations under the Mosaic or Jewish state. The phrase New Covenant, or New Testament,

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denotes the books which contain the record of his new covenant or compact with his people under the Messiah, or since Christ came. We find mention made of *The Book of the Covenant* in Exod. xxiv. 7, and in the New Testament the word is once used (2 Cor. iii. 14) with an undoubted reference to the sacred books of the Jews. By whom, or at what time, these terms were first used to designate the two divisions of the Sacred Scriptures, is not certainly known. There can be no doubt, however, of the great antiquity of the appellation.

The Jews divided the old Testament into three parts, called THE LAW, THE PROPHETS, and THE HAGIOGRAPHIA, or THE HOLY WRITINGS. This division is noticed by our Saviour in Luke xxiv. 44,\* "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." Josephus, the Jewish historian, also makes mention of the same division.† "We have," says he, "only twenty-two books which are to be believed to be of divine authority; of which five are the books of Moses. From the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, son of Xerxes, king of Persia, the prophets who were the successors of Moses have written in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God and documents of life for the use of men." It is probable that precisely the same books were not always included in the same division; but there can be no doubt that the division itself was always retained. The division into twenty-two books was made partly, no doubt, for the convenience of the memory. This was the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The English Bible contains thirty-nine books instead of twenty-two in the Old Testament. The number which Josephus reckons may be accurately made out as follows: The first division, comprehending the five books of Moses, or the Law. The second, including, 1 Joshua; 2 Judges, with Ruth; 3 Samuel; 4 Kings; 5 Isaiah; 6 Jeremiah, with Lamentations; 7 Ezekiel; 8 Daniel; 9 the twelve minor prophets; 10 Job; 11 Ezra, including Nehemiah; 12 Esther; 13 Chronicles; these thirteen books were called the Prophets. The four remaining will be Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. In regard to the second division, it is a fact well known, that the twelve smaller prophets, from Hosea to Malachi, were for convenience uniformly united in one volume; and that the small books of Ruth and Lamentations were attached to the larger works mentioned, and Ezra and Nehemiah were long reckoned as one book.

The arrangement of the books of the Bible has not always been the same. The order followed in the English Bible is taken from the Greek translation called the Septuagint. Probably the best way to read the Bible is to read the books as nearly as possible in the order in which they were written. Thus Isaiah informs us Isa. i. 1, that his prophecies were delivered in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz,

\* See note on that passage.

† Against Apion. book i.

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and Hezekiah ; and to be correctly understood, they should be read in connexion with the record of those reigns in Kings and Chronicles.

The names of most of the books in the Bible are taken from the Greek translation above mentioned.

The books of the Bible were anciently written without any breaks, or divisions into chapters and verses. For convenience, the Jews early divided the Old Testament into greater and smaller sections. These sections in the law and prophets were read in the worship of the synagogues. The New Testament was also early divided in a similar manner.

The division into chapters is of recent origin. It was first adopted in the 18th century by Cardinal Hugo, who wrote a celebrated commentary on the scriptures. He divided the Latin Vulgate, the version used in the church of Rome, into chapters nearly the same as those which now exist in our English translation. These chapters he divided into smaller sections by placing the letters A, B, C, &c., at equal distances from each other in the margin.

The division of chapters into verses was not made until a still later period. Cardinal Hugo's division into chapters became known to Rabbi Nathan, a distinguished Jew, who adopted it for the Hebrew Bible, and placed the Hebrew letters, used also as numerals, in the margin. This was used by Rabbi Nathan in publishing a concordance, and adopted by Athias in a printed edition of the Hebrew Bible in 1661.

The verses of the New Testament are a still more modern division, and are an imitation of those used by Rabbi Nathan in the fifteenth century. This division was invented and first used by Stephens, in an edition of the New Testament printed in 1551. The division was made as an amusement while he was on a journey from Lyons to Paris, during the intervals in which he rested in travelling. It has been adopted in all the subsequent editions of the Bible.

In regard to this division into chapters and verses, it is clear that it is of no authority whatever. It has been doubted whether the sacred writers used any points or divisions of any kind. It is certain that they were wholly unacquainted with those now in use. It is further evident that in all cases these divisions have not been judiciously made. The sense is often interrupted by the close of a chapter, and still oftener by the break in the verses. In reading the scriptures, little regard should be had to this division. It is of use now only for reference ; and inaccurate as it is, it must evidently be substantially retained. All the books that have been printed for three hundred years, which refer to the Bible, have made their reference to these chapters and verses ; and to attempt any change now, would be to render almost useless a great part of the religious books in our language, and to introduce inextricable confusion in all attempts to quote the Bible.



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The first translation of the Old Testament was made about the year 270 before the christian era. It was made at Alexandria in Egypt into the Greek language, and probably for the use of the Jews who were scattered among pagan nations. Ancient writers inform us, indeed, that it was made at the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus, to be deposited in the Library at Alexandria. It bears internal marks of having been made by different individuals, and no doubt at different times. It came to be extensively used in Judea, and no small part of the quotations in the New Testament were taken from it. There is no doubt that the apostles were familiar with it; and as it had obtained general currency, they chose to quote it rather than translate the Hebrew for themselves. It is called the Septuagint, or the version by the seventy, from a tradition that seventy elders of Israel, deputed for that purpose, were employed in making the translation.

The language spoken by our Saviour and his apostles was a corruption of the Hebrew, a mixture of that and the language spoken in Chaldæe, called Syro-Chaldaic, or more commonly the Syriac. The reason why the New Testament was not written in this language was, that the Greek had become the common language used throughout the eastern nations subject to the Romans. This general use of the Greek language was produced by the invasion and conquest of those nations by Alexander the Great, about 330 years before Christ. The New Testament was, however, early translated into the Syriac language. A translation is now extant in that language, held in great veneration by Syrian Christians, said to have been made in the first century or in the age of the apostles, and acknowledged by all to have been made before the close of the second century.

About the beginning of the fourth century, the Bible was translated into Latin by Jerome. This translation was made in consequence, as he says, of the incorrectness of a version then in use, called the *Italic*. The translation made by Jerome, now called the Latin Vulgate, is the authorized version of the church of Rome.

The Bible was translated by Luther into German in the beginning of the Reformation. This translation has done much to fix the German language, and is now the received version among the Lutheran churches.

There have been many other translations of the Bible, and there are many more still in progress. More than one hundred and fifty translations of the whole Bible, or parts of it, have been made during the last half century. Those which have been mentioned, together with the English, have been, however, the principal, and are most relied on as faithful exhibitions of the meaning of the Sacred Scriptures.

The English translation of the Bible now in use was made in the reign of James I. This translation was intended only as an improvement of those previously in existence. A short account of the translation of the Bible into our own language cannot fail to be interesting.

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It is not easy to ascertain the precise time when the gospel was introduced into Britain, or when the inhabitants were first in possession of the Bible. The earliest version of which we have any account, is a translation of the Psalms into the Saxon language about the year 706. But the principal translation at that early period was made by the "venerable Bede," about the year 730. He translated the whole Bible into the Saxon language.

The first English translation of the Bible was executed about the year 1290, by some unknown individual. About the year 1380, John Wickliffe, the morning star of the reformation, translated the entire Bible into English from the Latin. The great labour and expense of transcribing books before the invention of printing, probably prevented a very extensive circulation of the scriptures among the people.\* Yet the translation of Wickliffe is known to have produced a vast effect on the minds of the people. Knowledge was beginning to be sought for with avidity. The eyes of the people were beginning to open to the abominations of the church of Rome; and the national mind was preparing for the great change which followed in the days of Luther. So deep was the impression made by Wickliffe's translation, and so dangerous was it thought to be to the interest of the Romish religion, that a bill was brought into the House of Lords for the purpose of suppressing it. The bill was rejected through the influence of the Duke of Lancaster; and this gave encouragement to the friends of Wickliffe to publish a more correct translation of the Bible. At a convocation, however, held at Oxford, in 1408, it was decreed that no one should translate any text of the Holy Scriptures into English by way of a book, or little book, or tract, and that no book of this kind should be read that was composed in the time of John Wickliffe, or since his death. This decree led the way to a great persecution; and many persons were punished severely, and some even with death, for reading the Bible in English. The Bible translated by Wickliffe was never printed. Some years since the New Testament was printed in England.†

\* So great was the expense of transcribing the Bible at that time, that the price of one of Wickliffe's New Testaments was not less than forty pounds sterling. And it should be matter of devout gratitude to God, that, by the art of printing, the New Testament can now be obtained for four pence.

† The following is a specimen of this translation :

Matthew, chap. v.—And Jhesus seyng the peple, went up into an hil; and whanne he was sett, his disciplis camen to him. And he openyde his mouthe, and taughte hem; and seide, Blessid be pore men in spirit; for the kyngdom of hevenes is herun.<sup>1</sup> Blessid ben mylde men: for thei schulen weelde the erthe. Blessid ben thei that mournen: for thei schal be cumfortid. Blessid be thei that hungren and thirsten rigtwisnesse:<sup>2</sup> for thei schal be fulfilled. Blessid ben merciful men: for thei schul gete mercy. Blessid ben thei that ben of clene herte: for thei schulen se god. Blessid ben pesible men: for thei schulen be clepid *goddis children*. Blessid ben thei that suffren persecucioun

<sup>1</sup> *Thems.*

<sup>2</sup> *Rightfulness, MS. plures.*

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For the first printed English translation of the scriptures we are indebted to William Tyndal. He printed this translation at Antwerp in Flanders: and the copies were brought thence into England. So great was the opposition to this by the Roman Catholic clergy, that the bishop of London endeavoured to buy up whole editions as fast as they were printed, to burn them. This effort, however, produced little effect. Copies of the New Testament were multiplied. It is said that on one occasion Sir Thomas More, then chancellor of England, asked how Tyndal contrived to maintain himself abroad. To which it was replied that the bishop of London supported him, by purchasing the scriptures as fast as they could be printed.

In 1535 the whole Bible, translated into English, was printed in 48mo. and dedicated to the king, by Miles Coverdale. This was the first English translation of the Bible allowed by royal authority.

Various editions and translations of the scriptures, with various degrees of correctness, were printed in successive years, till, in 1568, the edition appeared which was called "the Bishop's Bible," or "the Great English Bible." This was prepared by royal authority. It was the work of much care and learning. Different learned men undertook to translate different parts of the Bible, and after being carefully performed and compared, it was printed, and directed to be used as an authorized English translation of the scriptures. This, after being reprinted many times, and after being in use for half a century, was succeeded by the translation at present in use.

As this is, in many respects, the most important of all English translations of the Sacred Scriptures, it is proper to dwell more fully on the circumstances under which it was made.

It was undertaken by the authority of king James I. of England. He came to the throne in 1603. Several objections having been made to "the Bishop's Bible," then in general use, he ordered a new translation to be made. This work he committed to fifty-four men: but before the translation was commenced, seven of them had either

*for rightwysnesse: for the kyngdom of hevenes is hern. Ye schul be blemyd whanne men schul curse you, and schul pursue you: and schul saye al yvel agens you lyngs for me. Joie ye and be ye glade: for your meede is plenteous in hevenes: for so thei han pursued also prophetis that weren before you. Ye ben salt of the erthe, that if the salt vanishe away wheryne schal it be saltid? to nothing it is worth over, no but it be cast out, and be defoulid of men. Ye ben light of the world, a citee sett on an hill may not be hid. Ne me teendith not a lanterne and puttith it undir a busel; but on a candilstik that it give light to alle that ben in the hous. So, achyne your light before men, that thei see youre gode workis, and glorifie your fadir that is in hevenes. Nyle ghe deme that I cam to undo the Lawe or the prophetis, I cam not to undo the lawe but to fuffille. Forsothe I sey to you till hevене and erthe passe, oon lettre, or oon tittle, schal not passe fro the Lawe till alle thingis be don. Therefore he that brekith oon of these leeste mandementis, and techith thus men, schal be clepid the Leest in the rewme of hevenes; but he that doth, and techith, schal be clepid greet in the kyngdom of hevenes.—Baber's Edit.*

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died, or had declined the task, so that it was actually accomplished by forty-seven. All of them were eminently distinguished for their piety and for their profound acquaintance with the original languages. This company of eminent men was divided into six classes, and to each class was allotted a distinct part of the Bible to be translated. "Ten were to meet at Westminster, and to translate from Genesis to the end of the second book of Kings. Eight assembled at Cambridge, and were to translate the remaining historical books, the Psalms, Job, Canticles, and Ecclesiastes. At Oxford seven were to translate the four greater Prophets, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and the twelve minor prophets. The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Revelation, were assigned to another company of eight at Oxford; and the Epistles were allotted to a company of seven at Westminster. Lastly, another company at Cambridge were to translate the Apocrypha."

To these companies the king gave instructions to guide them in their work of which the following is the substance:

The Bishop's Bible, then used, to be followed, and to be altered as little as the original would permit.

The names of the sacred writers to be retained as they were commonly used.

When a word had different significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the fathers, and most eminent writers.

No alteration to be made in the chapters and verses. No marginal notes to be affixed, except to explain the Greek and Hebrew words that could not be briefly and fitly explained in the text. Reference to parallel places to be set down in the margin.

Each member of a company to take the same chapters, and translate them according to the best of his abilities; and when this was done all were to meet together, and compare their translations, and agree which should be regarded as correct.

Each book, when thus translated and approved, to be sent to every other company for their approbation.

Besides this, the translators were authorized, in cases of great difficulty, to send letters to any learned men in the kingdom to obtain their opinions.

In this manner the Bible was translated into English. In the first instance each individual translated each book allotted to his company. Secondly, the readings to be adopted were agreed upon by that company assembled together. The book thus finished was sent to each of the other companies to be examined. At these meetings one read the English, and the rest held in their hands some Bible, of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, &c. If they found any fault, says Selden, they spoke; if not he read on.

The translation was commenced in 1607, and completed in about three years. At the end of that time, three copies of it were sent to London. Here a committee of six reviewed the work, which was afterwards re-

## INTRODUCTION

viewed by Dr. Smith, who wrote the preface, and by Dr. Bilson. It was first printed in 1611 at London by Robert Barker.

From this account it is clear that no ordinary care was taken to furnish to English readers a correct translation of the Sacred Scriptures. No translation of the Bible was ever made under more happy auspices; and it would now be impossible to furnish another translation in our language under circumstances so propitious. Whether we contemplate the number, the learning, or the piety of the men employed in it; the cool deliberation with which it was executed; the care taken that it should secure the approbation of the most learned men, in a country that embosomed a vast amount of literature; the harmony with which they conducted their work; or the comparative perfection of the translation, we see equal cause of gratitude to the great Author of the Bible that we have so pure a translation of his word.

From this time the English language became fixed. More than two hundred years have elapsed, and yet the simple and majestic purity and power of the English tongue is expressed in the English translation of the Bible, as clearly as when it was given to the world. It has become the standard of our language; and nowhere can the purity and expressive dignity of this language be so fully found as in the Sacred Scriptures.

The friends of this translation have never claimed for it inspiration or infallibility. Yet it is the concurrent testimony of all who are competent to express an opinion, that no translation of the Bible into any language has preserved so faithfully the sense of the original as the English. Phrases there may be, and it is confessed there are, which modern criticism has shown not to express all the meaning of the original; but as a whole, it indubitably stands unrivalled. Nor is it probable that any translation can now supply its place, or improve upon its substantial correctness. The fact that it has for two hundred years poured light into the minds of millions, and guided the steps of generation after generation in the way to heaven, has given to it somewhat of the venerableness which appropriately belongs to a book of God. Successive ages may correct some of its few unimportant errors; may throw light on some of its obscure passages; but to the consummation of all things, it must stand, wherever the English language is spoken, as the purest specimen of its power to give utterance to the meaning of ancient tongues, and of the simple and pure majesty of the language which we speak.

These remarks are made, because it is easy for men who dislike the plain doctrines of the Bible, and for those ignorant of the true history of its translation, to throw out insinuations of its unfaithfulness. From various quarters, from men opposed to the clear doctrines of the scriptures, are often heard demands for a new translation. We by no means assert the entire infallibility, much less the inspiration, of the English translation of the Bible. Yet of its general faithfulness to the *original there can be no doubt*. It would be easy to multiply testi-

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onies of the highest authority to this fact. But the general testimony of the world ; the profound regard paid to it by men of the purest character and most extensive learning ; the fact that it has warmed the hearts of the pious, ministered to the comfort of the wretched and the dying, and guided the steps of millions to glory for two hundred years, and now commands the high regard of Christians of so many different denominations, evinces that it is, to no ordinary extent, faithful to the original, and has a claim on the continued regard of coming generations.

It is perfectly clear, also, that it would be impossible *now* to translate the scriptures into the English language, under so favourable circumstances as attended the translation in the time of James I. No single set of men could so command the confidence of the christian world ; no convention, who claim the christian name, could be formed competent to the task, or if formed, could prosecute the work with harmony ; no single denomination could make a translation that would secure the undisputed respect of others. The probability is, therefore, that while the English language is spoken, and as far as it is read, the English Bible will continue to form the faith and direct the lives of those who use that wide-spread language ; and that the words which now pour light into our minds will continue to illuminate our understandings and mould the feelings of unnumbered millions in their path to immortal life.

**CHARACTERISTICS**  
**OF**  
**MATTHEW'S GOSPEL.**

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THE evangelical narratives, as John tells us, were written to record some of the signs which Jesus did in the presence of his disciples, in order that he might be believed to be "the Christ the Son of God: and that believing ye might have life through his name." John xx. 30, 31. The writers enjoyed an inspiration from the Holy Ghost which gives the stamp of divine authority and truth to every thing they have written. A slight inspection of their several records will show that they wrote independently of one another, and each has recorded such incidents and discourses as were necessary, along with the other narratives, to secure through all succeeding ages a tolerably complete view of the history, doings, and teachings of Him whom to know is life eternal. This fact shows that the writers of the gospels not only had one theme on which to dilate, but that they all penned their histories under the miraculous guidance of the Holy Spirit. Like the ancient prophets, they "wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Their style is diverse, and in the structure of their narratives there are characteristic differences, the marking of which will be of some use in enabling us to understand those narratives respectively. No two of the writers have selected the same things to record; neither have they pursued the same chronological order or connexion of events. How far the observable differences among them in these respects arose out of personal character, mental constitution, or education, would be a question more curious than useful; there can be no doubt that the Spirit of God employed the several peculiarities of these "holy men" the more effectually to accomplish the object for which their gospels assumed a written form.

The general character of Matthew's gospel is that of historical argument, addressed to Jews, and designed both to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was truly the Messiah, and to illustrate for their instruction

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and guidance the nature of that kingdom which he established. When this gospel was written, those agitations and troubles had commenced, into which the Jewish people were hurried by the confident expectation that they should soon receive the aid of the Messiah, as a temporal deliverer and prince, in efforts to shake off the Roman yoke. The Spirit of God intended, in all probability, by this historical argument, to restrain the impetuosity and wickedness of the age and people that Matthew addressed; to convince men that the Messiah had indeed appeared; and that his kingdom was greatly different in its pretensions and character, from all that the Jews were expecting. This intention explains three characteristics, which a careful reader will easily mark as distinguishing the present gospel.

1. The frequent references which Matthew makes to Old Testament prophecy. The genealogy which he gives at the opening of his gospel is an example of such reference; its object evidently is to show that Jesus was the legal heir to the throne of "his father David," as ancient prophecy had taught the Jews to expect. Throughout the gospels there are of course illustrations given of the fulfilment of ancient prophecy in several other particulars in the history of Jesus, these, however, are much more frequent in Matthew than in any other evangelist, and to his style of writing it pertains almost exclusively to give to these references an obviously argumentative character and bearing. Other evangelists make them as it were incidentally and in passing. Matthew makes them to fix attention on Jesus as the Messiah of whom the prophets spoke. Of twenty-eight such references, including two or three to the forerunner who was sent to prepare his way, sixteen, or more than half, occur in Matthew alone; six of them in connexion with the birth and early life of Jesus, three, as chap. iv. 14—16, viii. 17, and xii. 17—21, trace the fulfilment of prophecy in his ministry or personal character.

2. The preference which Matthew gives to the discourses of Jesus. John indeed records some of these discourses at greater length than Matthew, but we shall see when we come to speak of the characteristics of his gospel that there were special reasons for this in the probable purpose for which he wrote. It will be enough to remark here that the discourses which John records were mostly occasioned by particular circumstances, while those in Matthew are the ordinary and daily topics on which the Redeemer spoke. As it was Matthew's object specially to explain to Jews the spiritual nature of the kingdom which Jesus sought to establish, we can easily see why he gives so many of these discourses. They were the most satisfactory illustrations and proofs he could offer. Many of these discourses are recorded or referred to by Matthew exclusively. See chap. xi. 28—30, xii. 3—6, 25—29, xvi. 13—19, xvii. 12—26, xxv., xxvi. 13, xxviii. 18—20. The ordinary teaching of Jesus was thus employed as an argument in addition to that furnished by the accomplishment of



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prophecy in him to prove that he was the Messiah, and to show that his reign was spiritual.

3. The absence of a consecutive, chronological detail, evidently marking the narrative of Matthew. He does not write entirely without regard to the order of time; now and then in his narrative particles indicating sequence and dependence may be detected, but he most commonly groups together what was adapted to strengthen the convictions which his gospel was chiefly designed to produce. The chronology was of less importance to his end, and was therefore less regarded than was adaptation of fact to sustain his argument. In the sermon on the mount, for instance, Matthew has placed in one view the main points or characteristic features of the teaching of Jesus, collected perhaps from discourses delivered at different times and places. So again the record of the parables of Jesus, especially of those in chap. xiii., is rather intended to set forth the style of the Redeemer's teaching as intimated in ancient prophecy, than to mark the time and circumstances in which those parables were severally delivered. A similar observation will apply to the miracles recorded in chap. viii. ix., and to other parts of the gospel. In an historical argument these peculiarities would naturally obtain, and perhaps this circumstance may account for what all critics have more or less observed, viz., that Matthew quotes rather from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament than from that of the Septuagint version. As he was writing for Jews, and directing their attention to an argument founded on their own scriptures, this was natural. See chap. ii. 15; viii. 17; xxi. 5; xxvii. 46, and perhaps also we may thus explain chap. ii. 23, a passage which has occasioned difficulty among commentators. The evangelist gathers up and expresses in few words, well understood among Jews, the entire scope of many ancient predictions which foretold the contempt and reproach with which the Messiah would have to meet. See the note on the passage.

One idea seems to have guided Matthew in all that he set down as well as in all that he omitted. He regarded that only as relevant to his object which was adapted to carry conviction to the mind of a Jew that Jesus was the Christ. Absorbed in this prominent design he lost sight of every thing else, and, as a modern expositor has well said, "he makes use of events chiefly as points of support for the discourses which he lays before his readers, and from which his argument mainly arises."

S. G.

# P R E F A C E

TO THE

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

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THE word Gospel means good news, or a joyful message. It commonly signifies the message itself. But it is here used to denote the book containing the record of the message. The title "saint," given to the sacred writers of the New Testament, is of Roman Catholic origin, and is of no authority.

It is now conceded pretty generally that Matthew wrote his gospel in his native tongue; that is, the language of Palestine. That language was not pure Hebrew, but a mixture of the Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Syriac, commonly called Syro-Chaldaic, or Aramean. This language our Saviour undoubtedly used in his conversation;\* and his disciples would naturally use this language also, unless there were good reasons why they should write in a foreign tongue. It is agreed that the remainder of the New Testament was written in Greek. The reason for this, in preference to the native language of the writers, was, that Greek was the language then generally spoken and understood throughout the eastern countries conquered by Alexander the Great, and particularly in Judea, and in the regions where the apostles first laboured.

The christian fathers, without any exception, assert that Matthew wrote his gospel for the use of the Christians in Palestine; and say that it was written in the Hebrew dialect. It should be remarked, however, that many modern critics of much eminence do not suppose the evidence that Matthew wrote in Hebrew to be decisive; and believe that there is sufficient proof that, like the other writers of the New Testament, Matthew wrote in Greek. See Lardner's works, Supplement to second part of Credibility, &c., chap. v. vol. v., p. 294, London edition, 1831, 8vo.

The Gospel of Matthew exists now, however, only in Greek. The original Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic, if it was written in that language, has been designedly laid aside, or undesignedly lost. The questions

\* See instances in Mark vii. 34, and Matt. xxvii. 46.

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then naturally arise, who is the author of the Greek translation which we possess? and is it to be regarded of divine authority?

It has been conjectured by some that Matthew himself furnished a Greek translation of the Hebrew. This conjecture, in itself probable enough, wants testimony to support it. Athanasius, one of the early fathers, says that it was translated by "James, the brother of our Lord according to the flesh." Papias, another of the early fathers, says, that, "each one translated it as he was able." If James translated it, there can be no question about its inspiration and canonical authority. Nor is the question of its inspiration affected by our being ignorant of the name of the translator. The proper inquiry is, whether it had such evidence of inspiration as to be satisfactory to the church in the times when they were under the direction of the apostles. That it had such evidence, none acquainted with ancient history will doubt.

Epiphanius says that the Gospel by Matthew was written while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome. This was about the year of our Lord 63, the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. It is now generally supposed that this gospel was written about this time. There is very clear evidence in the gospel that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem. That destruction is clearly and minutely told; but there is not the slightest intimation that these predictions had been accomplished; a thing which we should naturally expect if the gospel was not written until after these calamities came upon the Jews. Compare Acts xi. 28. It has been till lately uniformly regarded as having been written before either of the other evangelists. Some of late have, however, endeavoured to show that the gospel of Luke was written first. All testimony, and all ancient arrangements of the books, are against the opinion; and when such is the fact, it is of little consequence to attend to other arguments. In all copies of the New Testament, and in all translations, this gospel has been placed first. This, it is probable, would not have been done, had not Matthew published his gospel before any other was written.

Matthew, the writer of this gospel, called also Levi, son of Alphæus, was a publican, or tax-gatherer, under the Romans. See Notes on Matt. ix. 9, Luke v. 27. Of his life and death little is known for certain. Socrates, a writer of the fifth century, says that he went to Ethiopia after the apostles were scattered abroad from Judea, and died a martyr in a city called Nadebbar; but by what kind of death is altogether uncertain. However, others speak of his preaching and dying in Parthia or Persia, and the diversity of their accounts seems to show that they are all without good foundation. See Lardner's works, vol. v., p. 296—298, *edition as above*.

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

## CHAPTER I.

*of Christ, 1—17. Joseph's name removed, 18—20, 24, 25. Name Jesus, 21. Prediction achieved, 22, 23.*

*Book of the generation<sup>1</sup> of Jesus Christ, the son of<sup>2</sup> David the son of Abraham.*

ii. 23—38. <sup>a</sup>ch. xxii. Ps. cxxxii. 11, 12, 30. <sup>b</sup>Gen. xxii. 18. Gal. iii. 16.

*Book of the generation.* This proper title of the chapter. It is as to say, "the account of the or family, or the genealogical Jesus Christ." The phrase is in Jewish writings. Compare 1. "This is the book of the sons of Adam," i. e. the genealogy of the family or descendants of Adam. See also Gen. vi. 9. The Jews, as we do, kept such tables of families, and it is probable that copied from the record of the Joseph. ¶ *Jesus.* See ver. 21. The word *Christ* is a Greek signifying anointed. The Hebrew signifying the same is *Messiah*. Jesus is called either the Messiah, Christ, meaning the same thing. We speak of the Messiah; Christak of him as the Christ. An when kings and priests were set their office, they were anointed. Lev. iv. 3; vi. 20; Exod. l; xxix. 7; 1 Sam. ix. 16; xv. 1; xxiii. 1. To anoint, therefore, often the same as to consecrate, set apart to any office. Thence set apart are said to be anointed,ointed of God. It is for this that the name is given to the Lord Dan. ix. 24. He was set apart to be the king, and high-priest,phet of his people. Anointing was, moreover, supposed to be the aid of the influences of the Holy and as God gave him the Spirit measure, John iii. 34, so he is ecularly the anointed of God. son of David. The word son the Jews had a great variety of ions. It means literally a son;

2 Abraham<sup>4</sup> begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob<sup>5</sup> begat Judas and his brethren;

3 And Judas begat Phares<sup>6</sup> and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom;<sup>7</sup> and Esrom begat Aram;<sup>8</sup>

4 And Aram begat Aminadab;<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xxi. 2—5. <sup>5</sup> Gen. xxv. 26. <sup>6</sup> Gen. xxix. 35. <sup>7</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 29, 30. <sup>8</sup> Gen. xlv. 12. <sup>9</sup> Ruth iv. 19.

then a grandson; a descendant; an adopted son; a disciple, or one who is an object of tender affection—one who is to us as a son. In this place it means a descendant of David; or one who was of the family of David. It was important to trace the genealogy of Jesus up to David, because the promise had been made that the Messiah should be of his family, and all the Jews expected it would be so. It would be impossible, therefore, to convince a Jew that Jesus was the Messiah, unless it could be shown that he was descended from David. See Jer. xxiii. 5; Ps. cxxxii. 10, 11; compared with Acts xiii. 23, and John vii. 42. ¶ *The son of Abraham.* The descendant of Abraham. The promise was made to Abraham also. See Gen. xii. 3; xxi. 12; compare Heb. xi. 13; Gal. iii. 16. The Jews expected that the Messiah would be descended from him; and it was important, therefore, to trace the genealogy up to him also. Though Jesus was of humble birth, yet he was descended from most illustrious ancestors. Abraham, the father of the faithful, "the beauteous model of an eastern prince," and David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, the conqueror, the magnificent and victorious leader of the people of God, were both among his ancestors. From these two persons, the most eminent for piety, and for their excellencies the most renowned of all the men of antiquity, sacred or profane, the Lord Jesus was descended; and though his birth and life were humble, yet they who regard an illustrious descent as of value, may find here all that is to be admired in piety, purity, patriotism, splendour, dignity, and renown.

2—16. These verses contain the ge-

and Aminadab begat Naasson;<sup>1</sup> and Naasson begat Salmon;<sup>2</sup>

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab;<sup>3</sup> and Booz begat Obed<sup>4</sup> of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6 And Jesse begat David<sup>5</sup> the king; and David the king begat Solomon<sup>6</sup> of her that had been the wife of Urias;

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. ii. 10. <sup>2</sup> Num. i. 7. <sup>3</sup> Ruth iv. 20. <sup>4</sup> Josh. vi. 25. <sup>5</sup> Ruth iv. 21. <sup>6</sup> Ruth iv. 13. <sup>7</sup> 1 Sam. xvii. 12. <sup>8</sup> 2 Sam. xii. 24.

nealogy of Jesus. Luke also, ch. iii., gives a genealogy of the Messiah. No two passages of scripture have caused more difficulty than these, and various attempts have been made to explain them. There are two sources of difficulty in these catalogues. 1. Many names that are found in the Old Testament are here omitted; and 2. the tables of Matthew and Luke appear in many points to be different. From Adam to Abraham, Luke only has given the record. From Abraham to David the two tables are alike. Of course there is no difficulty in reconciling these two parts of the tables. The difficulty lies in that part of the genealogy from David to Christ. There they are entirely different. They are manifestly different lines. Not only are the names different, but Luke has mentioned, in this part of the genealogy, no less than forty-two names, while Matthew has recorded but twenty-seven.

Various ways have been proposed to explain this difficulty; and it must be admitted that none of them is perfectly satisfactory. It does not comport with the design of these notes to enter minutely into an explanation of the perplexities of these passages. All that can be done is to suggest the various ways in which attempts have been made to explain them. 1. It is remarked that in nothing are mistakes more likely to occur than in such tables. From the similarity of names, and from the different names by which the same person is often called, and from many other causes, errors would be more likely to creep into the text in genealogical tables, than in other writings. Some of the difficulties may have pos-

7 And Solomon begat Roboam;<sup>\*</sup> and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

10 And Ezekias<sup>6</sup> begat Manas-

<sup>\*</sup> 1 Chron. iii. 10. <sup>6</sup> Kin. xx. 21. <sup>1</sup> Chron. iii. 13.

sibly occurred from this cause. 2. Most interpreters have supposed that Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph, and Luke that of Mary. They were both descended from David, but in different lines. This solution derives some plausibility from the fact that the promise was made to David, and as Jesus was not the son of Joseph, it was important to show that Mary was also descended from him. Though this solution is plausible, and may be true, yet it wants evidence. It cannot, however, be proved that this was not the design of Luke. 3. It has been said also that Joseph was the legal son and heir of Heli, though the real son of Jacob, and thus the two lines terminated in him. This was the ancient explanation of most of the fathers, and on the whole is the most satisfactory. It was a law of the Jews, that if a man died without children, his brother should marry his widow. Thus the two lines might have been intermingled. According to this solution, which was first proposed by Africanus, Matthan, descended from Solomon, married Eshta, of whom was born Jacob. After Matthan's death, Matthat being of the same tribe, but of another family, married his widow, and of this marriage Heli was born. Jacob and Heli were therefore children of the same mother. Heli dying without children, his brother Jacob married his widow, and begat Joseph, who was thus the legal son of Heli. This is agreeable to the account in the two evangelists. Matthew says that Jacob begat Joseph; Luke says that Joseph was the son of Heli, i.e. was his legal heir, or reckoned in law to be his son. This can be seen by the plan

and Manasses begat Amon ;  
Amon begat Josias ;

And Josias<sup>1</sup> begat Jechonias  
his brethren, about the time  
were carried away to Babylon :  
And after they were brought

see read, *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim*  
*Jechonias.*

to Babylon, Jechonias begat Sa-  
lathiel ;<sup>2</sup> and Salathiel begat Zoro-  
babel ;<sup>3</sup>

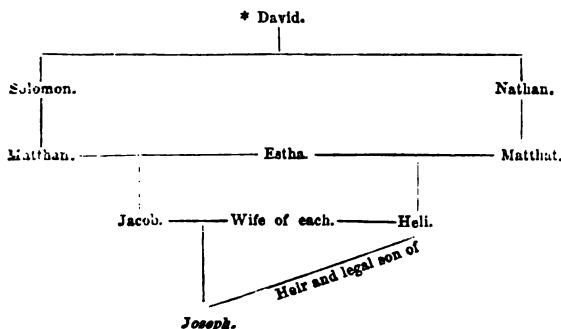
18 And Zorobabel begat Abiud ;  
and Abiud begat Eliakim ; and Eli-  
akim begat Azor ;

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. iii. 17. <sup>2</sup> Neh. xii. 1.

below,\* showing the nature of the  
error.

ough these solutions may not seem  
entirely satisfactory, yet there are  
additional considerations which  
set the matter at rest, and lead  
to the conclusion that the narratives are  
altogether inconsistent. 1. No difficulty  
was found, or alleged, in regard  
to, by any of the early enemies of  
Christianity. There is no evidence that  
any adduced them as containing a  
fiction. Many of those enemies  
were acute, learned, and able ; and they  
by their writings that they were not  
satisfied to detect all the errors that  
might possibly be found in the sacred  
text. Now it is to be remembered  
that the Jews were fully competent to  
detect these tables were incorrect, if  
they were really so ; and it is clear that  
they were fully disposed, if possible, to do  
so. In fact, therefore, that it is not done  
is evidence that they thought it to  
be correct. The same may be said of  
the acute Pagans who wrote against  
Christianity. None of them have called  
in question the correctness of these tables.  
It is full proof that, in a time when it

was easy to understand these tables, they  
were believed to be correct. 2. The  
evangelists are not responsible for the  
correctness of these tables. They are re-  
sponsible only for what was their real  
and professed object to do. What was  
that object ? It was to prove to the  
satisfaction of the Jews, that Jesus was  
descended from David, and therefore that  
there was no argument from his ancestry  
that he was not the promised Messiah.  
Now to make this out it was not neces-  
sary, nor would it have conduced to their  
argument, to form a new table of gene-  
alogy. All that could be done was, to go  
to the family records—to the public  
tables, and copy them as they were  
actually kept, and show that, according  
to the records of the nation, Jesus was  
descended from David. This, among the  
Jews, was full and decided testimony in  
the case. And this was doubtless done.  
In the same way, the records of a family  
among us, as they are kept by the family,  
are proof in courts of justice now, of the  
birth, names, &c., of individuals. Nor  
is it necessary or proper for a court to  
call them in question, or to attempt to  
correct them. So the tables here are



It And how long? Since; and, was born I say, who is called  
Since began before; and before  
before being

13. and Elina began: Emma:  
and Gustav began: Martin: and  
Martin began: and:

14 And I have been in the  
the interest of the people of the

— 1 —

17 So all the generations from  
Abraham to David are fourteen  
generations: and from David until  
the carrying away into Babylon  
are fourteen generations: and from  
the carrying away into Babylon

great evidence to the very point that the writers wished to establish: that is, to show to the Jews that Jesus of Nazareth was descended from David. All that can be asked now is, whether they copied the names of these families correctly. It is clear that no man can prove that they did not so copy them, and, therefore, that no one can advance them as an argument against the correctness of the New Testament.

17. *1. In the genealogies, &c.* This division of the names in their genealogy was incontestably adopted for the purpose of aiding the memory. It was common among the Jews; and other similar instances are preserved. They were destitute of other books besides the Old Testament, and had but few copies of that among them, and chose thereby in their synagogues. They would, therefore, naturally devise plans to keep up the remembrance of the principal facts in their history. One method of doing this was, to divide the tables of genealogy into portions of equal length, to be committed to memory. This greatly facilitated the remembrance of the names. A man who wished to continue to memory the names of a regiment of soldiers, would naturally divide it into companies, and platoons, and this would greatly facilitate his work. This was doubtless the reason in the case before us. And, though it is not strictly accurate, yet it was the Jewish way of keeping their records, and answered their purpose. There were three leading persons and events that nearly, or quite, divided their history into equal portions: Abraham, David, and the Babylonian captivity. From one to the other was about sixteen generations, and, by omitting a few names, it was sufficiently accurate to be made a general guide or directory in remembering their history.

In counting these divisions, however, it will be seen that there is some difficulty in making out the number fourteen in each division. This may be explained in the following manner. In the first division Abraham is the first, and David the last, making together fourteen. In the second series, David would naturally be placed first, and the fourteen was completed in Joseph, about the time of the captivity as sufficiently near for the purpose of a convenient comparison. 2 Chron. xxxv. In the third division, Joseph would naturally be placed first, and the number was completed in David. So that David and Joseph would be reckoned twice. This may be shown by the following table of the names:-

<i>First column.</i>	<i>Second column.</i>	<i>Third column.</i>
Abraham,	David,	Jonas,
Isaac,	Solomon,	Jecheonias,
Jacob,	Reuben,	Sathiel,
Judas,	Asin,	Zorobabel,
Phares,	Asa,	Abiad,
Esau,	Jeaphaz,	Abiakim,
Aam,	Joram,	Aaze,
Amirahab,	Ozias,	Sadoc,
Nathan,	Joatham,	Achim,
Salmon,	Achaz,	Eliad,
Beni,	Ezekias,	Ezeasar,
Obed,	Mannasse,	Matthan,
Jesse,	Amos,	Jacob,
David,	Jesus,	Joseph,
—14	—14	—14

¶ *Carrying away into Babilon.* This refers to the captivity of Jerusalem, and the removal of the Jews to Babilon by Nebuchadnezzar, five hundred and eighty years before Christ. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. Josiah was king when these calamities began to come upon the Jews, but the exact time of the seventy years of captivity did not commence until the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, or thirty-two years after the death of Josiah. Babilon was situated on the Euphrates, and was

unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

18 ¶ Now the birth<sup>1</sup> of Jesus Christ was on this wise : When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph,<sup>2</sup> before they came together,

<sup>1</sup> Luke i. 37—35. <sup>2</sup> Fifth year before the account called A.D.

encamped with walls which were about sixty miles in circuit, eighty-seven feet broad, and three hundred and fifty feet high, and the city was entered by a hundred brazen gates, twenty-five on each side. It was the capital of a vast empire, and the Jews remained there for seventy years. See my notes on Isaiah, ch. xiii.

18. *On this wise.* Thus. In this manner. ¶ *Espoused, Betrothed, or engaged to be married.* There was commonly an interval of ten or twelve months among the Jews between the contract of marriage and the celebration of the nuptials. See Gen. xxiv. 55; Judges x. 3; yet such was the nature of this engagement, that unfaithfulness to each other was deemed adultery. See Deut. xxi. 25, 28. ¶ *With child by the Holy Ghost.* See note, Luke i. 35.

19. *Her husband.* The word in the original does not imply that they were married. It means here the man to whom she was espoused. ¶ *A just man.* Justice consists in rendering to every man his own. Yet this is evidently not the character intended to be given here of Joseph. It means that he was kind, tender, merciful; so attached to Mary, that he was not willing that she should be exposed to public shame. He sought, therefore, secretly to dissolve the conception, and to restore her to her friends without the punishment commonly inflicted on adultery. The word just has not unfrequently this meaning of mildness, or mercy. See 1 John i. 9. Psa. cxlv. 17; see ver. 10—19 of the psalm. ¶ *A public example.* To expose her to public shame or infamy. Adultery has always been considered a crime of a very heinous nature. In Egypt it was punished by cutting off the nose of the adulteress; in Persia the nose and ears were cut off; in Judea the punishment was death by stoning. Lev. xx. 10; Ezek. xvi. 38, 40; John vii. 53. *This punishment was also in-*

she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded<sup>3</sup> to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xxiv. 1—4.

flicted where the person was not married, but betrothed. Deut. xxii. 23, 24. In this case, therefore, the regular punishment would have been death in this painful and ignominious manner. Yet Joseph was a religious man, mild and tender; and he was not willing to complain of Mary to the magistrate, and expose her to death, but sought to avoid the shame, and to put her away privately. ¶ *Put her away privily.* The law of Moses gave the husband the power of divorce. Deut. xxiv. 1. It was customary in a bill of divorce to specify the causes for which the divorce was made, and witnesses were also present to testify to the divorce. But in this case it seems Joseph resolved to put her away without specifying the cause; for he was not willing to make her a public example. This is the meaning here of *privily*. Both to Joseph and Mary this must have been a great trial. Joseph was ardently attached to her, but her character was likely to be ruined, and he deemed it proper to separate her from him. Mary was innocent, but Joseph was not yet satisfied of her innocence. Yet we may learn how to put our trust in God. He will defend the innocent. Mary was in danger of being exposed to shame. Had she been connected with a cruel, passionate, and violent man, she would have died in disgrace. But God had so ordered it, that she was connected with a man mild, amiable, and tender; and, in due time, Joseph was apprized of the truth in the case, and took his faithful and beloved wife to his bosom. Thus, our only aim should be to preserve a conscience void of offence, and God will guard our reputation. We may be assailed, or circumstances may be against us; but in due time God will take care to vindicate our character, and save us from ruin.

20. *He thought on these things.* He did not act hastily. He did not take the



these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee

Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

course which the law would have permitted him to do, if he had been happy, violent, or violent. It was a case deeply affecting his happiness, his character, and the reputation and character of his chosen companion. God will guide the thoughtful and the serious. And when we have looked patiently at a perplexed subject, and know not what to do, then God, as in the case of Joseph, will interpose to lead us, and direct our way. *Mat. xiv. 9.*

“*The angel of the Lord.* The word *angel* literally means a messenger. It is applied chiefly in the scriptures to those invisible holy beings who have not fallen from and who live in heaven. 1. *Tim. v. 21.* compare *Jude 9.* and who are sent down to minister to those who shall be born of salvation. *Heb. i. 14.* Dan. *ix. 21.* The word is sometimes applied to men as messengers. *Luke vi. 24.* *Ex. 15.* *James i. 25.* to the winds. *Ps. cxv. 4.* to the pestilence. *Ps. cxviii. 4.* or to whatever is applied to make known, or to execute the will of God. It is commonly applied, however, to the faithful, happy spirits that are in heaven, whose only duty and pleasure it is to do the will of God. Various ways were employed by them in making known the will of God, by dreams, visions, assuming a human appearance, &c. “*In a dream.* This was a common way of making known the will of God to the ancient prophets and people of God. *Gen. xx. 3.* *xixviii. 1.* *1 Kin. iii. 5.* *Job iv. 13—15.* *Dan. vi. 1.* It was way it was ascertained that these dreams were from God, cannot now be told. It is sufficient for me to know that in this way many of the prophecies were communicated; and to remark that now there is no evidence that we are to put reliance on our dreams. Dreams are wild, irregular movements of the mind, when it is unshackled by reason, and it is mere superstition to suppose that God now makes known his will in this way. See my Introduction to *Isaiah*. “*Son of David.* Descendant of David. See *ver. 1.* The angel put him

in mind of his relation to David perhaps to prepare him for the intelligence that Mary was to be the mother of the Messiah—the promised heir of David. “*Four say.* Do not hesitate or have fears about her virtue and purity. Do not fear that she will be unworthy of you, or will disgrace you.

22. *His name JESUS.* The name *Jesus* is the same as *Saviour*. It is derived from the verb signifying to save. In Hebrew it is the same as *Joshua*. In two places in the New Testament it is used where it means Joshua, the leader of the Jews into Canaan, and in our translation the name Joshua should have been retained. *Acts vi. 45.* *Heb. iv. 8.* It was a very common name among the Jews. “*He shall save.* This expresses the same as the name, and on this account the name was given to him. He saves men by having died to redeem them; by giving the Spirit to renew them. *John xvi. 7.* by his power in enabling them to overcome their spiritual enemies, in defending them from danger, in guiding them in the path of duty, in sustaining them in trials and in death; and he will raise them up at the last day, and exalt them to a world of purity and love. “*His people.* Those whom the Father has given to him. The Jews were called the people of God, because he had chosen them to himself, and regarded them as his peculiar and beloved people, separate from all the nations of the earth. Christians are called the people of Christ, because it was the purpose of the Father to give them to him. *Isa. xlii. 11.* *John vi. 37.* and because in due time he came to redeem them to himself. *Titus ii. 14.* 1. *Peter i. 2.* “*From their sins.* This is the great business of Jesus in coming and dying. It is not to save men in their sins, but from their sins. Sinners could not be happy in heaven. It would be a place of wretchedness to the guilty. The design of Jesus was, therefore, to save from sin; 1. by dying to make an atonement. *Titus ii. 14.* and 2. by renewing the

sen, and thou shalt call his name JESUS:<sup>1</sup> for he shall save<sup>2</sup> his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Saviour. <sup>2</sup> Acts v. 31; xlii. 23, 38.

heart, and purifying the soul, and preparing his people for a pure and holy heaven. And from this we may learn: 1. That Jesus had a design in coming into the world; he came to save his people—and that design will surely be accomplished. It is impossible that in any part of it he should fail. 2. We have no evidence that we are his people, unless we are saved from the power and dominion of sin. A mere profession of being his people will not answer. Unless we give up our sins: unless we renounce the pride, pomp, and pleasure of the world, and all our lusts, and crimes, we have no evidence that we are the children of God. It is impossible that we should be Christians if we indulge in sin and live in the practice of any known iniquity. 3. That all professing Christians should feel that there is no salvation unless it is from sin, and that they can never be admitted to a holy heaven hereafter, unless they are made pure, by the blood of Jesus, here.

22, 23. The prophecy here quoted is recorded in Isa. vii. 14. It was delivered about seven hundred and forty years before Christ, in the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah. The land of Judah was threatened with an invasion by the united armies of Syria and Israel, under the command of Rezin and Pekah. Ahaz was alarmed, and seems to have contemplated calling in aid from Assyria to defend him. Isaiah was directed to go to Ahaz in his consternation, and tell him to ask a sign from God, ver. 10, 11; that he, to look to God rather than to Assyria for aid. This he refused to do. He had not confidence in God; but feared that the land would be overrun by the armies of Syria ver. 12, and relied only on the aid which he hoped to receive from Assyria. Isaiah answered that, in these circumstances, the Lord would himself give a sign, or a pledge, that the land should be delivered. The sign was, that a virgin should have a son, and before that son would arrive to years of discretion, the land would be forsaken by these hostile kings. The prophecy was, therefore, designed originally to denote to Ahaz that the

it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet,<sup>3</sup> saying,

23 Behold a virgin shall be with

<sup>3</sup> Isa. vii. 14.

c

land would certainly be delivered from its calamities and dangers, and that the deliverance would not be long delayed. The united land of Syria and Israel, united now in confederation, would be deprived of both their kings, and thus the land of Judah be freed from the threatening dangers. This appears to be the literal fulfilment of the passage in Isaiah. ¶ *Might be fulfilled.* It is more difficult to know in what sense this could be said to be fulfilled in the birth of Christ. To understand this, it may be remarked that the word fulfilled is used in the scriptures, and in other writings, in many senses, of which the following are some: 1. When a thing is clearly predicted, and comes to pass: as the destruction of Babylon, foretold in Isa. xlii. 19—22; and of Jerusalem, in Matt. xxiv. 2. When one thing is testified, or shadowed forth by another, the type is said to be fulfilled. This was the case in regard to the types and sacrifices in the Old Testament, which were fulfilled by the coming of Christ. See Heb. ix.

—3. When prophecies of future events are expressed in language more elevated and full than the particular thing, at first denoted, demands. Or, when the language, though it may express one event, is also so full and rich as appropriately to express other events in similar circumstances, and of similar import. Thus, e. g. the last chapters of Isaiah, from chap. xl. foretell the return of the Jews from Babylon; and every circumstance mentioned occurred in their return. But the language is more expanded and sublime than was necessary to express their return. It will also express appropriately a much more important and magnificent deliverance—that of the redeemed under the Messiah, and the return of the people of God to him, and the universal spread of the gospel; and therefore it may be said to be fulfilled in the coming of Jesus, and the spread of the gospel. So if there were any other magnificent and glorious events, still, in similar circumstances and of like character, it might be said also that these prophecies were fulfilled in all of them. The language is

child, and shall bring forth a son, and<sup>1</sup> they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.<sup>2</sup>

24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep<sup>3</sup> did as the angel of the

<sup>1</sup> Or, his name shall be called. <sup>2</sup> John i. 14.  
<sup>3</sup> 2 Kin. v. 11—14. Heb. xi. 7, 8.

so full and rich, and the promises so grand, that they appropriately express all these deliverances. This may be the sense in which the prophecy now under consideration may be said to have been fulfilled. 4. Language is said to be fulfilled when, though it was used to express one event, yet it may be used also to express another. Thus a fable may be said to be fulfilled when an event occurs similar to the one concerning which it was first spoken. A parable has its fulfilment in all the cases to which it is applicable; and so of a proverb, or a declaration respecting human nature. The declaration, "There is none that doeth good," Ps. xiv. 3, was at first spoken of a particular race of wicked men. Yet it is applicable to others, and in this sense may be said to have been fulfilled. See Rom. iii. 10. In this use of the word fulfilled, it means, not that the passage was at first intended to apply to this particular thing, but that the words aptly or appropriately express the thing spoken of, and may be applied to it. We may say of this, as was said of another thing, and thus the words express both, or are fulfilled. The writers of the New Testament seem occasionally to have used the word in this sense. ¶ *A virgin shall be with child.* Matthew clearly understands this as applying literally to a virgin. Compare Luke i. 34. It thus implies that the conception of Christ was entirely miraculous, or that the body of the Messiah was created directly by the power of God, agreeably to the declaration in Heb. x. 5,—"*Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me.*" ¶ *Emmanuel.* This is a Hebrew word, and means literally *God with us.* Matthew, doubtless, understands this word as denoting that the Messiah was really "*God with us,*" or that the divine nature was united to the human. He does not affirm that this was its meaning when

Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife :

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son : and he called his name JESUS.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xiii. 2. <sup>6</sup> Luke ii. 21.

used in reference to the child to whom it was first applied ; but this was its meaning as applicable to the Messiah. It was fitly expressive of his character ; and in this sense it was fulfilled. When first used by Isaiah, it denoted simply that the birth of the child was a sign that God was with the Jews, to deliver them. The Hebrews often used the name of Jehovah, or God, in their proper names. Thus, Isaiah means "the salvation of Jehovah;" Eleazer, "help of God;" Eli "my God," &c. But Matthew evidently intends more than was denoted by the simple use of such names. He had just given an account of Christ's miraculous conception; of his being begotten by the Holy Ghost. God was, therefore, his Father. He was divine as well as human. His appropriate name was "God with us." And though the mere use of such a name would not prove that he had a divine nature, yet as Matthew uses it, and meant evidently to apply it, it does prove that Jesus was more than a man; that he was God as well as man. And it is this which gives glory to the plan of redemption. It is this which is the wonder of angels. It is this which makes the plan so vast, so grand, so full of instruction and comfort to Christians, see Phil. ii. 6—8. It is this which sheds such peace and joy into the sinner's heart; which gives him such security of salvation; and renders the condescension of God in redemption so great, and his character so lovely.

"Till God in human flesh I see,  
My thoughts no comfort find;  
The holy, just, and sacred Three,  
Are terrors to my mind."

"But if IMMANUEL's face appears,  
My hope, my joy begins;  
His grace removes my slavish fears,  
His blood removes my sins."

For a full examination of the passage, see my Notes on Isa. vii. 14.

25, *Knew her not.* The doctrine of the virginity of Mary before the birth of Jesus is a doctrine of the scriptures, and

## CHAPTER II.

*Eastern wise men inquire after Christ,*

1, 2. *Herod's consternation and inquiry,* 3—8. *The wise men find Jesus,* 9—12. *The flight of Joseph to Egypt,*

very important to be believed. But the scriptures do not affirm that she had no children afterwards. Indeed all the accounts in the New Testament lead us to suppose that she had. See notes on ch. xiii. 55, 56. The language here evidently implies that she lived as the wife of Joseph after the birth of Jesus. \* *Her first-born son.* Her eldest son, or he that by the law had the privilege of birth-right. This does not necessarily imply that she had other children, though it seems probable. It was the name given to the son which was first born, whether there were others or not. \* *His name Jesus.* This was given by divine appointment, ver. 21. It was conferred on him on the eighth day, at the time of his circumcision. Luke, ii. 21.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *When Jesus was born.* See the full account of his birth in Luke ii. 1—20. \* *In Bethlehem of Judea.* Bethlehem, the birth-place of Christ, was a small town about six miles south of Jerusalem. The word *Bethlehem* means, *house of bread*—perhaps the name was given to the place on account of its great fertility. It was also called Ephrata, a word supposed likewise to signify fertility. Gen. xxxv. 19; Ruth iv. 11; Psalm cxxxii. 6. It was called the city of David, Luke ii. 4, because it was the city of his nativity. 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 18. It was called Bethlehem of Judea, to distinguish it from a town of the same name in Galilee; Josh. xix. 15. The soil of Bethlehem was noted for its fertility. Ancient travellers frequently spoke of its productions. The town is situated on an eminence, in the midst of hills and vales. At present it contains about two hundred houses, inhabited chiefly by Christians and Mohammedans, who live together in peace. About two hundred paces east of Bethlehem, the place is still shown where our Saviour is supposed to have been born. There is a church and a convent there; and beneath the church, a subterranean chapel, which is lighted by thirty-two lamps, which is said to be

13—15. *Herod's cruelty,* 16—18. *Joseph's return from Egypt on Herod's death,* 19—23.

NOW when Jesus was born<sup>1</sup> in the 4th year before the account called A.D.

the place where was the stable in which Jesus was born. No reliance is, however, to be placed on this tradition. ¶ *Herod the king.* Judea, where our Saviour was born, was a province of the Roman empire. It was taken about sixty-three years before, by Pompey, and placed under tribute. Herod received his appointment from the Romans, and had reigned at the time of the birth of Jesus thirty-four years. Though he was permitted to be called king, yet he was in all respects dependent on the Roman emperor. He was commonly called Herod the Great, because he had distinguished himself in the wars with Antigonus, and his other enemies, and because he had evinced great talents, as well as great cruelties and crimes, in governing and defending his country, in repairing the temple, and in building and ornamenting the cities of his kingdom. At this time Augustus was emperor of Rome. The world was at peace. All the known nations of the earth were united under the Roman emperor. Intercourse between different nations was easy, and safe. Similar laws prevailed. The use of the Greek language was general throughout the world. All these circumstances combined to render this a favourable time to introduce the gospel, and to spread it through the earth; and the providence of God was remarkable in fitting the nations, in this manner, for the easy and rapid spread of the christian religion among all nations. ¶ *Wise men.* The original word here is *magoi*, from which comes our word *magician*, now used in a bad sense, but not so used in the original. The persons here denoted were philosophers, priests, or astronomers. They dwelt chiefly in Persia and Arabia. They were the learned men of the eastern nations, devoted to astronomy, to religion, and to medicine. They were held in high esteem by the Persian court, were admitted as counsellors, and followed the camps in war to give advice. ¶ *From the east.* It is unknown whether they came from Persia or Arabia. Both countries might be denoted by the word

Jerusalem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there

east—that is, east from Judea. ¶ *Jerusalem*. The capital of Judea. As there is frequent reference in the New Testament to Jerusalem, as it was the place of the public worship of God, as it was the place where many important transactions in the life of the Saviour occurred, and the place where he died; and as no sabbath school teacher can intelligently explain the New Testament without some knowledge of that city, it seems desirable to present a brief description of it. A more full description may be seen in Calmet's Dictionary, and in the common works on Jewish Antiquities.—Jerusalem was the capital of the kingdom of Judah, and was built on the line dividing this tribe from the tribe of Benjamin. It was once called Salem, Gen. xiv. 18; Ps. lxxvi. 2, and in the days of Abraham it was the abode of Melchizedek. When the Israelites took possession of the promised land, they found this stronghold in the possession of the Jebusites, by whom it was called Jebus or Jebusi, Josh. xviii. 28. The name Jerusalem was compounded, probably, of the two, by changing a single letter, and calling it, for the sake of the sound, Jerusalem instead of Jebusalem. The ancient Salem was probably built on Mount Moriah or Acra—the eastern and western mountains on which Jerusalem was subsequently built. When the Jebusites became masters of the place, they erected a fortress in the southern quarter of the city, which was subsequently called Mount Zion, but which they called Jebus; and although the Israelites took possession of the adjacent territory, Josh. xviii. 28, the Jebusites still held this fortress or upper town until the time of David, who wrested it from them, 2 Sam. v. 7—9, and then removed his court from Hebron to Jerusalem, which was thenceforward known as the city of David, 2 Sam. vi. 10, 12; 1 Kin. viii. 1. Jerusalem was built on several hills—Mount Zion on the south, Mount Moriah on the east—on which the temple was subsequently built, see Notes on ch. xxi. 12; Mount Acra on the west, and Mount Bezetha on the north. Mount Moriah and Mount Zion were separated by a valley called by Josephus the Valley of Chisemoneers, over which there was a bridge or raised way

leading from the one to the other. On the south-east of Mount Moriah, and between that and mount Zion, there was a bluff or high rock capable of strong fortification, called Ophel. The city was encompassed by hills. On the west there were hills which overlooked the city; on the south was the valley of Jehoshaphat, or the valley of Hinnom, see Notes on Matt. v. 22, separating it from what is called the Mount of Corruption; on the east was the valley of the brook Kedron, dividing the city from the Mount of Olives; and on the north the country was more level, though it was a broken or rolling country. To the south-east the valleys of the Kedron and Jehoshaphat united, and the waters flowed through the broken mountains in a south-east direction to the Dead Sea, some fifteen miles distant. The city of Jerusalem stands in 31° 50' north latitude, and 35° 20' east longitude from Greenwich. It is thirty-four miles south-easterly from Jaffa—the ancient Joppa—which is its sea-port, and one hundred and twenty miles south-westerly from Damascus. The best view of the city of Jerusalem is from Mount Olivet on the east, see Notes on ch. xxiv.; the mountains in the east being somewhat higher than those on the west. The city was anciently enclosed within walls—a part of which are still standing. The position of the walls has been at various times changed—as the city has been larger or smaller, or as it has extended in different directions. The wall on the south formerly included the whole of Mount Zion, though the modern wall runs over the summit, including about half of the mountain. In the time of the Saviour, the northern wall enclosed only Mounts Acra and Moriah north—though after that time Agrippa extended the wall so as to include Mount Bezetha on the north. About half of that mount is included in the present wall. The limits of the city on the east and the west being more determined by the nature of the place, have been more fixed and permanent. The city was watered in part by the fountain of Siloam on the east, for a description of which, see Notes on Luke xiii. 4, and on Isa. vii. 3; and in part by the fountain of Gihon, on the west of the city, which flowed into the vale of Jehoshaphat; and in the time

came wise men from the east<sup>1</sup> to Jerusalem,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kin. iv. 30.

of Solomon by an aqueduct, part of which is still remaining, by which water was brought from the vicinity of Bethlehem. The pools of Solomon, three in number—one rising above another—and adapted to hold a large quantity of water—are still remaining in the vicinity of Bethlehem. The fountain of Siloam still flows freely, see Note on Isa. vi. 3, though the fountain of Gihon is commonly dry. A reservoir or tank, however, remains at Gihon. Jerusalem had, perhaps, its highest splendour in the time of Solomon. About four hundred years after, it was wholly destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. It lay utterly desolate during the seventy years of the Jewish captivity. Then it was rebuilt, and reduced to some degree of its former magnificence, and remained about six hundred years, when it was utterly destroyed by Titus, A.D. 70. In the reign of Adrian, the city was partly rebuilt under the name of Ælia. Monuments of pagan deity were erected in it, and it remained under pagan jurisdiction until Helena, the mother of Constantine, overthrew the memorials of idolatry, and erected a magnificent church over the spot which was supposed to be the place of the Redeemer's sufferings and burial. Julian, the apostate, attempting to destroy the credit of the prophecy of the Saviour that the temple should remain in ruins, Matt. xxiii., endeavoured to rebuild the temple. His own historian, Ammianus Marcellinus (see Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses), says that the workmen were incited by balls of fire coming from the earth, and that he was compelled to abandon the undertaking. Jerusalem continued in the power of the eastern emperors till the reign of the caliph Umar, the third in succession from Mohammed, who reduced it under his control about the year 640. The Saracens continued masters of Jerusalem until the year 1099, when it was taken by the crusaders under Godfrey of Bouillon. They founded a new kingdom of which Jerusalem was the capital, which lasted eighty-eight years under nine kings. At last this kingdom was utterly ruined by Saladin; and though the Christians

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King<sup>2</sup> of the Jews? for we

<sup>2</sup> Zech. ix. 9.

once more obtained possession of the city, yet they were obliged again to relinquish it. In 1217 the Saracens were expelled by the Turks, who have ever since continued in possession of it. Jerusalem has been taken and pillaged seventeen times, and millions of men have been slaughtered within its walls. At present there is a splendid mosque—the mosque of Omar—on the site of the temple. It is a city containing a population variously estimated at from fifteen to fifty thousand, though probably not far from twenty thousand, comprising Jews, Turks, Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, and Papists. The Jews have a number of synagogues. The Catholics have a convent, and have the control of the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Greeks have twelve convents; the Armenians have three convents on Mount Zion, and one in the city; the Copts, Syrians, and Abyssinians have each of them one convent. The streets are narrow, and the houses are of stone, most of them low and irregular with flat roofs or terraces, and with small windows only towards the street, usually protected by iron grates. The above description has been obtained from a great variety of sources, and it would be useless to refer to the works where the facts have been obtained. [As a reference to Jerusalem often occurs in the New Testament, and as it will be useful to Sunday school teachers and others to have a correct knowledge of the ancient site, the editor strongly recommends a plan of it, as it was in the time of Christ, engraved by W. Dickes from a model by G. D. Brunetti, Esq. It may be had of the publisher of this work, —S.G.]

2. *Where is he, &c.* There was, at this time, a prevalent expectation that some remarkable personage was about to appear in Judea. The Jews were anxiously looking for the coming of the Messiah. By computing the time mentioned by Daniel, ch. ix. 25—27, they knew that the period was approaching when the Messiah should appear. This personage, they supposed, would be a temporal prince, and they were expecting that he would deliver them from Roman bondage. It was natural that this expectation should spread into other

have seen his star<sup>1</sup> in the east, and are come to worship<sup>2</sup> him.

<sup>1</sup> Num. xiv. 1. 1. 2. <sup>2</sup> Job. v. 21.

countries. Many Jews, at that time, dwelt in Egypt, in Rome, and in Greece; many, also, had gone to eastern countries, and in every place they carried their scriptures, and diffused the expectation that some remarkable person was about to appear. Suetonius, a Roman historian, speaking of this rumour, says: "An ancient and settled persuasion prevailed throughout the east, that the Fates had decreed some one to proceed from Judea, who should attain universal empire." Tacitus, another Roman historian, says: "Many were persuaded that it was contained in the ancient books of their priests, that at that very time the east should prevail, and that some one should proceed from Judea, and possess the dominion." Josephus, also, and Philo, two Jewish historians, make mention of the same expectation. The fact that such a person was expected is clearly attested. Under this expectation these wise men came to do homage to Jesus, and inquired anxiously where he was born? ¶ *His star.* Among the ancients, the appearance of a star or comet was regarded as an omen of some remarkable event. Many such appearances are recorded by the Roman historians at the birth or death of distinguished men. Thus, they say, that at the death of Julius Cæsar a comet appeared in the heavens, and shone seven days. These wise men also considered this as an evidence that the long-expected Prince was born. It is possible that they had been led to this belief by the prophecy of Balaam, Num. xxiv. 17: "There shall come a star out of Jacob," &c. What this star was, is not known. There have been many conjectures respecting it, but nothing is revealed concerning it. We are not to suppose that it was what we commonly mean by a star. The stars are vast bodies fixed in the heavens, and it is absurd to suppose that one of them was sent to guide the wise men. It is most probable that it was a luminous appearance, or meteor, such as we now see sometimes shoot from the sky, or such as

3 When Herod<sup>3</sup> the king had heard these things, he was

<sup>3</sup> This was Herod the Great.

appears stationary, which the wise men saw, and which directed them to Jerusalem. It is possible that the same thing is meant which is mentioned by Luke ii. 9: "The glory of the Lord shone round about them," i. e. see Note on this place, a great light appeared shining around them. That light might have been visible from afar, and have been seen by the wise men in the east. ¶ *Is the east.* This does not mean that they had seen the star to the east of themselves, but that, when they were in the east they had seen this star. As this star was in the direction of Jerusalem, it must have been west of them. It might be translated, 'We, being in the east, have seen his star.' It is called his star, because they supposed it to be intended to indicate the time and place of his birth. ¶ *To worship him.* This does not mean that they had come to pay him religious homage, or to adore him. They regarded him as the king of the Jews. There is no evidence that they supposed he would be divine. They came to honour him as a prince or a king, not as God. The original word implies no more than this. It meant to prostrate one's self before another; to fall down and pay homage to another. This was the mode in which homage was paid to earthly kings, and this they wished to pay to the new-born king of the Jews. See the same meaning of the word in Matt. xviii. 26; xx. 20; Luke xiv. 10; Acts i. 25. The English word worship also meant formerly, "to respect, to honour, to treat with civil reverence."

3. *Had heard these things.* Had heard of their coming, and of the star, and of the design of their coming. ¶ *He was troubled.* Herod had obtained the kingdom by great crimes, and by shedding much blood. He was, therefore, easily alarmed by any remarkable appearance; and the fact that this star appeared, and that it was regarded as proof that the king of the Jews was born, alarmed him. Besides, it was a common expectation that the Messiah was about to appear, and he feared that his reign was about to come to an end. He, therefore, began to inquire in what way he might secure his

\* VII. Vespas. cap. iv.

\* Annal. v. 13.

\* Josephus, Hist. Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 16.

troubled,<sup>1</sup> and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In

<sup>1</sup> Acts v. 24. xvi. 20.

own safety, and the permanency of his government. ¶ *All Jerusalem.* The people of Jerusalem, and particularly the friends of Herod. There were many waiting for the Consolation of Israel, to whom the coming of the Messiah would be a matter of joy; but all of Herod's friends would doubtless be alarmed at his coming.

4. *The chief priests.* By the chief priests here are meant not only the high priest and his deputy, but also the heads or chiefs of the twenty-four classes into which David had divided the sacerdotal families. 1 Chron. xxiii. 6, xxiv.; 2 Chron. viii. 14; xxxvi. 14; Ezra viii. 24. ¶ *Scribes.* By the scribes, in the New Testament, are meant learned men, men skilled in the law, and members of the great council. They were probably the learned men, or the lawyers of the nation. They kept the records of the court of justice, the registers of the synagogues, wrote their articles of contract and sale, their bills of divorce, &c. They were also called lawyers. Matt. xxi. 35; and doctors of the law, Luke v. 17. They were called scribes from the act of their writing the public records. They were not, however, a religious sect, but might be either Pharisees or Sadducees. By the chief priests and scribes here mentioned, is denoted the sanhedrim or great council of the nation. This was composed of seventy-two men, who had the charge of the civil and religious affairs of the Jews. On this occasion, Herod, in alarm, called them together, professedly to make inquiry respecting the birth of the Messiah. ¶ *Demanded of them.* Inquired, or asked of them. As they were the learned men of the nation, and as it was their business to study and explain the Old Testament, they were presumed to know what the prophecies had declared on that point.

Bethlehem of Judæa for thus it is written<sup>2</sup> by the prophet,

6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall<sup>3</sup> rule<sup>4</sup> my people Israel.

<sup>2</sup> Mic. v. 2. John vii. 42. <sup>3</sup> Or, fed. Isa. xl. 17. <sup>4</sup> Rev. ii. 27.

His object was to ascertain from prophecy where he was born, that he might strike an effectual blow. He seems not to have had any doubt about the time when he should be born. He was satisfied that the time had come.

5, 6. *By the prophet.* The sanhedrim answered without hesitation. It was settled by prophecy. This prophecy is found in Mic. v. 2. In that prophecy, both the place of his birth and the character of the Messiah are so clearly set forth, that there was no room to doubt. It will be observed that there is a considerable difference between the passage as quoted by the sanhedrim, and as it stands in Micah. The main point, however, is retained—the place of his birth. We are not concerned, therefore, in showing how these passages can be reconciled. Matthew is not responsible for the correctness of the quotation. He affirms only that they gave this answer to Herod, and that Herod was satisfied. Admitting that they did not quote the passage correctly, it does not prove that Matthew has not reported their answer as they gave it, and this is all that he pretends to give. ¶ *Art not the least.* In Micah, *though thou be little.* Though a small place so far as population is concerned, yet it shall not be small, or least, in honour; for the Messiah shall be born there. His birth gave the place an honour which could not be conferred on the larger cities by all their numbers, their splendour, and their wealth. The birth of a distinguished personage was always supposed to give honour and importance to a city or country. Thus seven cities contended for the honour of giving birth to Homer; Stratford-upon-Avon is distinguished as the birth-place of Shakspeare; and Corsica as the birth-place of Napoleon. ¶ *A governor.* A ruler. This is one of the characters of the Messiah, who is the king of his people, John xviii. 37. The



## Finding of Jesus.

## MATTHEW.

A.D. 1.

7. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come<sup>1</sup> and worship him also.

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxvi. 24. Isa. i. 15.

word rule here means to *rule* as a shepherd does his flock, in faithfulness and tenderness. Compare John x. 11. Isa. ix. 7; xl. 10, 11.

7. *Privily*. Secretly, privately. He did this to ascertain the time when Jesus was born. ¶ *Diligently*. Accurately, exactly. He took pains to learn the precise time that the star appeared. He did this because he naturally concluded that the star appeared just at the time of his birth, and he wished to know precisely how old the child was.

8. *Go, and search diligently*, &c. Herod took all possible means to obtain accurate information respecting the child, that he might be sure of destroying him. He not only ascertained the probable time of his birth, and the place, but he sent the wise men that they might actually see him, and bring him word. All this might have looked suspicious if he had not clothed it with the appearance of religion. He said to them, therefore, that he did it that he might go and worship him also. From this we may learn, 1. That wicked men often cloak their evil designs under the appearance of religion. They attempt to deceive those who are really good, and to make them suppose that they have the same design. But God cannot be deceived, and he will bring them to punishment. 2. Wicked men often attempt to make use of the pious to advance their evil purposes. Men like Herod will stop at nothing if they can carry their ends. They endeavour to deceive the simple, allure the unsuspecting, and to beguile the weak, to answer their purposes of wickedness. 3. The plans of wicked men are often well laid. They occupy a long time. They make diligent in-

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw<sup>2</sup> in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced<sup>3</sup> with exceeding great joy.

11 ¶ And when they were come into the house, they saw the young

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 2. <sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 4.

quy. And all of it has the appearance of religion. But God sees the design; and though men are deceived, yet God cannot be. Prov. xv. 3.

9. 10. *The star—went before them*. From this it appears that the star was a luminous meteor, perhaps at no great distance from the ground. It is not unlikely that they lost sight of the star after they had commenced their journey from the east. It is probable that it appeared to them first in the direction of Jerusalem. They concluded that the expected King had been born, and immediately commenced their journey to Jerusalem. When they arrived there, it was important that they should be directed to the very place where he was, and the star again appeared. It was for this reason that they rejoiced. They felt assured that they were under a heavenly guidance, and would be conducted to the new-born King of the Jews. And this shows, 1. That the birth of Jesus was an affair of great moment, worthy of God's directing these men to find the place of his nativity. 2. God will guide those who are disposed to find the Saviour. Even if for a time the light should be withdrawn, yet it will again appear, and direct inquirers in the way to the Redeemer. 3. Direction to Christ should fill us with joy. He is the way, the truth, and the life; the Saviour, the friend, the all in all; there is no other way of life, and there is no peace to the soul till he is found. When we are guided to him therefore, our heart should overflow with joy and praise; and we should humbly and thankfully follow every direction that leads to the Son of God. John xii. 35, 36

11. *The house*. The place where he

child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented<sup>1</sup> unto him gifts:<sup>2</sup> gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

<sup>1</sup> Or, offered. <sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxii. 10. Isa. lx. 6.

was born, or the place where his parents were staying at that time. ¶ *Fell down.* This was the usual way of showing respect or homage among the Jews. Esther viii. 3; Job i. 20; Ps. lxxii. 11; Isa. xli. 6; Dan. iii. 7. ¶ *Worshipped him.* Did him homage as King of the Jews. See on ver. 2. ¶ *Had opened their treasures.* The treasures which they had brought, or the boxes, &c., in which they had brought their gold, &c. ¶ *They presented unto him gifts.* These were presented to him as King of the Jews, because they supposed he was to be a distinguished prince and conqueror. It was customary at the birth of a prince to show respect for him by making him presents or offerings of this kind. See Gen. xxxii. 14, xliii. 11; 1 Sam. x. 27; 1 Kings x. 2; Psa. lxxii. 10—15. This custom is still common in the east; and it is everywhere unusual there to approach a person of distinguished rank without a valuable present. ¶ *Frankincense.* This was a production of Arabia. It was a white resin or gum. It was obtained from a tree by making incisions in the bark, and suffering the gum to flow out. It was highly odorous or fragrant when burned, and was, therefore, used in worship, where it was burned as a pleasant offering to God. See Exod. xxx. 8; Lev. xvi. 12. It is produced, also, in the East Indies, but chiefly in Arabia; and hence it has been supposed probable that the wise men came from Arabia. ¶ *Myrrh.* This was also a production of Arabia, and was obtained from a tree in the same manner as frankincense. The name denotes bitterness, and was given to it on account of its great bitterness. It was used chiefly in embalming the dead, because it had the property of preserving from putrefaction. Compare John xix. 39. It was much used in Egypt and in Judea. It was obtained from a thorny tree, which grows eight or nine feet high. It was at an early period an article of

12 And being warned of God<sup>3</sup> in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the

<sup>3</sup> ch. i. 120.

commerce, Gen. xxxvii. 25; and was an ingredient of the holy ointment, Exod. xxx. 23. It was also used as an agreeable perfume, Esther ii. 12; Ps. xlv. 8; Prov. vii. 17. It was, also, sometimes mingled with wine to form an article of drink. Such a drink was given to our Saviour, when about to be crucified, as a stupefying potion, Mark xvi. 23. Compare Matt. xxvii. 34. These offerings were made because they were the most valuable which their country produced. They were tokens of respect and homage which they paid to the new-born King of the Jews. They evinced their high regard for him, and their belief that he was to be an illustrious prince: and the fact that their deed is recorded with approbation, shows us that we should offer our most valuable possessions, our all, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Wise men came from far to do him homage, and bowed down, and presented their best gifts and offerings. It is right that we give to him, also, our hearts, our property, our all.

12. *Warned of God, &c.* This was done doubtless because if they had given Herod precise information where he was, it would have been easy for him to send forth and slay him. And from it we learn that God will watch over those whom he loves, that he knows how to foil the purposes of the wicked, and to deliver his own out of the hands of those who would destroy them. ¶ *In a dream.* See Note on ch. i. 20.

13. *The angel.* See ch. i. 20. ¶ *Flee into Egypt.* Egypt is situated to the south-west of Judea, and is distant from Bethlehem perhaps about sixty miles. It was at this time a Roman province. The Greek language was spoken there. There were many Jews there, who had a temple and synagogues; and Joseph, therefore, would be among his own countrymen, and yet beyond the reach of Herod. The jurisdiction of Herod extended only to the river Sihon, or river of Egypt, and

*Herod disappointed.*

MATTHEW.

A.D. 1:

Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod<sup>1</sup> will seek the young child, to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxiii. 15, 17.

of course, beyond that, Joseph was safe from his designs. For a description of Egypt, see my notes on Isa. xix. It is remarkable, that this is the only time in which our Saviour was out of Palestine, and that this was in the land where the children of Israel had suffered so much and so long under the oppression of the Egyptian kings. The very land which was the land of bondage and groaning for the Jews, became now the land of refuge and safety for the new-born King of Judea. God can overturn nations and kingdoms, so that those whom he loves shall be safe anywhere.

15. *The death of Herod.* Herod died in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. It is not certainly known in what year he began his reign, and hence it is impossible to determine the time that Joseph remained in Egypt. The best chronologers have supposed that he died somewhere between two and four years after the birth of Christ; but at what particular time cannot now be determined. Nor can it be determined at what age Jesus was taken into Egypt. It seems probable that he was supposed to be a year old, see ver. 16, and of course the time that he remained in Egypt was not long. Herod died of a most painful and loathsome disease in Jericho. See Note on ver. 16; also Josephus, Ant. xvii. 10. ¶ *That it might be fulfilled, &c.* This language is recorded in Hos. xi. 1. It there evidently speaks of God's calling his people out of Egypt under Moses. See Exod. iv. 22, 23. It might be said to be fulfilled in his calling Jesus from Egypt, because the words in Hosea aptly expressed this also. The same love which led him to deliver his people Israel from the land of Egypt, now led him also to deliver his Son from that place. The words used by Hosea would express both events. See Note on ch. i. 22. Perhaps,

young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,<sup>2</sup> Out of Egypt have I called my son.

16 ¶ Then Herod when he saw

<sup>2</sup> Hos. xi. 1.

also, the place in Hosea became a proverb, to express any great deliverance from danger; and thus it could be said to be fulfilled in Christ, as other proverbs are in cases to which they are applicable. It cannot be supposed that the passage in Hosea was a prophecy of the Messiah, but was only used by Matthew appropriately to express the event.

16. *Mocked of the wise men.* When he saw that he had been deceived by them, that is, that they did not return as he had expected. It does not mean that they did it for the purpose of mocking or deriding him; but that he was disappointed in their not returning. ¶ *Esceasing wrath.* Very angry. He had been disappointed and deceived. He expected to send an executioner and kill Jesus alone. But since he was disappointed in this, he thought he would accomplish the same thing, and be sure to destroy him, if he sent forth and put all the children in the place to death. This is an illustration of the power of anger. It stops at nothing. If it cannot accomplish just what it wishes, it does not hesitate to go much further, and accomplish much more evil than it at first designed. He that has a wicked heart, and indulges in anger, knows not where it will end, and will commonly commit far more evil than he at first intended. ¶ *Slew all the children.* That is all the male children. This is implied in the original. The design of Herod was to cut off him that had been born King of the Jews. His purpose, therefore, did not require that he should slay all the female children; and though he was cruel, yet we have no right to think that he attempted here any thing except what he thought to be for his own safety, and to secure himself from a rival. ¶ *In all the coasts thereof.* The word coast is commonly applied now to the regions around the

that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children

that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof from two years old and under, according to the time

sea, as the sea coast. Here it means the adjacent places, the settlements or hamlets around Bethlehem—all that were in that neighbourhood. We do not know how large a place Bethlehem was; nor, of course, how many were slain. But it was not a large place, and the number could not be very great. It is not probable that it contained more than one or two thousand inhabitants; and in this case the number of children slain was not probably over twenty or thirty. ¶ *From two years old and under.* Some writers have said that in the original this does not mean that they had completed two years; but that they had entered on the second year, or had completed about one year, and entered on the second. But the meaning of the word is doubtful. It is quite probable that they would not be particular about the exact age, but slew all that were about that age. ¶ *According to the time, &c.* He had endeavoured to ascertain of the wise men the exact time of his birth. He supposed he knew the age of Jesus. He slew, therefore, all that were of his age; that is, all that were born about the time when the star appeared, perhaps from six months old to two years. There is no reason to think that he would command those to be slain who had been born after the star appeared.

This destruction of the infants is not mentioned by Josephus, but for this omission three reasons may be given. 1. Josephus, a Jewish historian, and a Jew, would not be likely to record any thing that would appear to confirm the truth of Christianity. 2. This act of Herod was really so small compared with his other crimes, that the historian might not think it worthy of record. Bethlehem was a small and obscure village, and the other crimes of Herod were so great and so public, that it is not to be wondered at that the Jewish historian has passed over this. 3. The order was probably given in secret, and might not have been known to Josephus. It pertained to the Christian history; and if the evangelists had not written, it might have been unknown or forgotten. Besides, no argument can

be drawn from the silence of the Jewish historian. No reason can be given why Matthew should not be considered to be as fully entitled to credit as Josephus. Yet there is no improbability in the account given by Matthew. Herod was an odious and bloody tyrant, and the facts of his reign prove that he was abundantly capable of this wickedness. The following bloody deeds will show that the slaying of the infants was in perfect accordance with his character. The account is taken from Josephus, as arranged by Dr. Lardner. Aristobulus, brother of his wife Mariamne, was murdered by his direction at eighteen years of age, because the people of Jerusalem had shown some affection for his person. In the seventh year of his reign he put to death Hyrcanus, grandfather of Mariamne, then eighty years of age, and who had formerly saved Herod's life; a man who, in every revolution of fortune, had shown a mild and peaceable disposition. His beloved and beautiful wife, Mariamne, was publicly executed, and her mother Alexandra soon after. Alexander and Aristobulus, his two sons by Mariamne, were strangled in prison by his orders upon groundless suspicions, as it seems, when they were at man's estate, were married, and had children. In his last sickness, a little before he died, he sent orders throughout Judea, requiring the presence of all the chief men of the nation at Jericho. His orders were obeyed, for they were enforced with no less penalty than that of death. When they were come to Jericho, he had them all shut up in the circus; and culling for his sister Salome, and her husband Alexis, he said to them: "My life is now short. I know the Jewish people, and nothing will please them better than my death. You have them now in your custody. As soon as the breath is out of my body, and before my death can be known, do you let in the soldiers upon them, and kill them. All Judea, then, and every family, will, though unwillingly, mourn at my death." Nay, Josephus says, that with tears in his eyes he conjured them, by their love to him and their fidelity to God, not to fail of

which he had diligently inquired<sup>1</sup> of the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 7.

doing him this honour. What objection, after this, can there be to the account of his murdering the infants at Bethlehem? Surely there could be no cruelty, barbarity, and horrid crime, which such a man was not capable of perpetrating.

17. 18. *Jeremy*. Jeremiah. This quotation is taken from Jer. xxxi. 15. The word *fulfilled* here, is taken evidently in the sense that the words in Jeremiah aptly express the event which Matthew was recording. The original design of this prophecy was to describe the sorrowful departure of the people into captivity, after the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuzaradan. The captives were assembled at Rama, Jeremiah himself being in chains, and there the fate of those who had escaped in the destruction of the city, was decided at the will of the conqueror, Jer. xl. 1. The nobles had been slain, and the eyes of their king put out after the murder of his sons before his sight, and the people were then gathered at Rama in chains, whence they were to start on their mournful journey, slaves to a cruel monarch, leaving behind them all that was dear in life. The sadness of such a scene is well expressed in the language of the prophet, and no less beautifully and fitly applies to the melancholy event which the evangelist records, and there could be no impropriety in his using it as a quotation.

Rama was a small town in the tribe of Benjamin, not far from Bethlehem. Rachel was the mother of Benjamin, and was buried near to Bethlehem, Gen. xxxv. 7—19. Rama was about six miles north-west of Jerusalem, near Bethel. The name Rama signifies an eminence, and was given to the town because it was situated on a hill. Rama is commonly supposed to be the same as the Arimathea of the New Testament—the place where Joseph lived, who begged the body of Jesus; see Matt. xxvii. 57. This is also the same place in which Samuel was born, where he resided, died, and was buried, and where he anointed Saul as king; 1 Sam. i. 1, 19; ii. 11; vii. 4; xix. 18; xxv. 1. *Mr. King*, an American missionary,

was spoken by Jeremy<sup>2</sup> the prophet, saying.

18 In Rama was there a voice

<sup>2</sup> Jer. xxxi. 15.

was at Rama—now called Romba—in 1824; and Mr. Whiting, another American missionary, was there in 1835. He says, “the situation is exceedingly beautiful. It is about two hours distant from Jerusalem to the north-west, on an eminence commanding a view of a wide extent of beautiful, diversified country. Hills, plains, and valleys, highly cultivated fields of wheat and barley, vineyards and oliveyards are spread out before you as on a map; and numerous villages are scattered here and there over the whole view. To the west and north-west, beyond the hill-country, appears the vast plain of Sharon, and farther still you look out upon the great and wide sea. It occurred to me as not improbable that in the days of David and Solomon, this place may have been a favourite retreat during the heat of summer; and that here the former may have often struck his sacred lyre. Some of the psalms, or at least one of them, see Pa. civ. 25, seem to have been composed in some place which commanded a view of the Mediterranean; and this is the only place, I believe, in the vicinity of Jerusalem, that affords such a view.”

Rama was once a strongly fortified city, but there is no city here at present. A half-ruined Mohammedan mosque, which was originally a christian church, stands over the tomb of the prophet; besides which, a few miserable dwellings are the only buildings that remain on this once celebrated spot.

There is a town about thirty miles north-west of Jerusalem, on the road to Joppa, now called Ramla, or Ramle, which is described by many geographers, and some of the best maps, as the Rama of Samuel, and the Arimathea of Joseph. It commanded a view of the whole valley of Sharon, from the mountains of Jerusalem to the sea, and from the foot of Carmel to the hills of Gaza.

By a beautiful figure of speech, the prophet introduces the mother weeping over the tribe, her children, and with them weeping over the fallen destiny of Israel, and over the calamities about to come upon the land. Few images could

and, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.  
19 ¶ But when Herod was dead,

behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

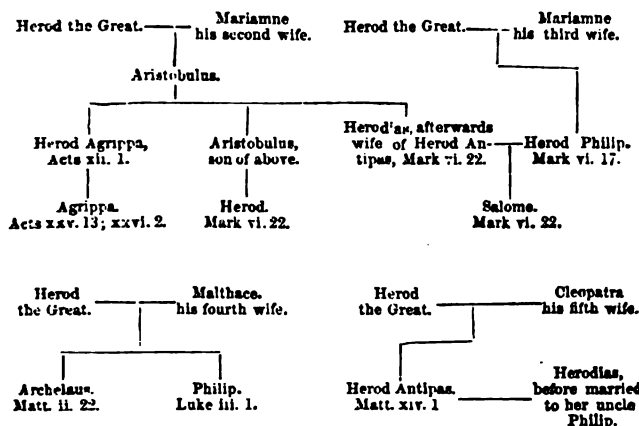
20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go

more striking than thus to introduce a mother, long dead, whose sepulchre was near, weeping bitterly over the terrible calamities that befel her descendants. The language and the image aptly and sensitively expressed the sorrows of the mothers in Bethlehem, when Herod slew her infant children. Under the cruelty of the tyrant almost every family was a family of tears; and well might there be lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning.

We may remark here, that the sacred writers were cautious of speaking of the characters of wicked men. Here was one of the worst men in the world, committing one of the most awful crimes, and yet there is not a single mark of exclamation; not a single reference to any other part of his conduct; nothing that could add to the knowledge that his other conduct was not upright. There is no action and malignant dragging him into

the narrative, that they might gratify malice, in making free with a very bad character. What was to their purpose, they record; what was not, they left to others. This is the nature of religion. It does not speak evil of others, except when necessary, nor then does it take pleasure in it.

19. *Herod was dead.* See Note on ver. 15. Herod left three sons, and the kingdom at his death was divided between them. To Archelaus was given Judea, Idumea, and Samaria; to Philip, Batanea, Trachonitis, &c.; to Antipas, Galilee and Perea. Each of the sons of Herod was also called Herod, and these are the individuals who are so frequently referred to in the New Testament during the ministry of the Saviour and the labours of the apostles. The following table will show at a glance the chief connexions of this family, as far as they are mentioned in the sacred history.



20. *They are dead which sought, &c.* This either refers to Herod alone, as is not uncommon, using the plural number for the singular; or it may refer to Herod

and his son Antipater. He was of the same cruel disposition as his father and was put to death by his father about five days before his own death.

into the land of Israel: for they are dead<sup>1</sup> which sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Ar-

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iv. 12.

22. *He heard that Archelaus did reign.* Archelaus possessed a cruel and tyrannical disposition, similar to his father. At one of the passovers he caused three thousand of the people to be put to death in the temple and city. After he had reigned nine years he was banished for his crimes to Gaul, where he died. Joseph, knowing the character of Archelaus, and fearing that he could not be safe in his dominions, went as he was directed by God into Galilee. ¶ *The parts of Galilee.* The country of Galilee. At this time the land of Palestine was divided into three parts: Galilee, on the north; Samaria, in the middle; and Judea, on the south. Galilee was under the government of Herod Antipas, who was comparatively a mild prince; and in his dominions Joseph might find safety.

23. *Nazareth.* This was a small town, situated in Galilee, west of Capernaum, and not far from Cana. It was built partly in a valley, and partly on the declivity of a hill; Luke iv. 29. A hill is yet pointed out, to the south of Nazareth, as the one from which the people of the place attempted to precipitate the Saviour. It was a place, at that time, proverbial for wickedness; John iv. 46. It is now a large village, with a convent and two churches. One of the churches, called the church of the Annunciation, the finest in the Holy Land, except of the holy sepulchre in Jerusalem.

A modern traveller describes Nazareth as situated upon the declivity of a hill, the vale which spreads out before it resembling a circular basin, encompassed by mountains. Fifteen mountains appear to meet to form an enclosure for this beautiful spot, around which they rise like the edge of a shell, to guard it against intrusion. It is a rich and beautiful field in the midst of barren mountains.

Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:\*

23 And he came and dwelt in a

\* Ch. III. 13. Luke II. 39.

Another traveller speaks of the streets as narrow and steep, the houses, which are flat-roofed, are about two hundred and fifty in number, and the inhabitants he estimates at two thousand. The population of the place is variously stated, though the average estimate is three thousand; of whom about five hundred are Turks, and the residue nominal Christians.

As all testimony to the truth and fidelity of the sacred narrative is important, we have thought ourselves justified in connecting with this article a passage from the journal of Mr. Jowett, an intelligent modern traveller; especially as it is so full an illustration of the passage of Luke already cited.

"Nazareth is situated on the side, and extends nearly to the foot, of a hill, which, though not very high, is rather steep and overhanging. The eye naturally wanders over its summit, in quest of some point from which it might probably be that the men of this place endeavoured to cast our Saviour down, Luke iv. 29, but in vain: no rock adapted to such an object appears here. At the foot of the hill is a modest, simple plain, surrounded by low hills, reaching in length nearly a mile; in breadth, near the city, a hundred and fifty yards; but farther south, about four hundred yards. On this plain there are a few olive and fig trees, sufficient, or rather scarcely sufficient, to make the spot picturesque. Then follows a ravine, which gradually grows deeper and narrower towards the south; till, after walking about another mile, you find yourself in an immense chasm, with steep rocks on either side, from whence you behold, as it were beneath your feet, and before you, the noble plain of Esdraelon. Nothing can be finer than the apparently immeasurable prospect of this plain, bounded on the south by the mountains of Samaria.

city called Nazareth:<sup>1</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by

the prophets, *He shall be called a Nazarene.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John i. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Num. vi. 13. Judg. xiii. 8. 1 Sam. i. 11. Am. ii. 10—12. Acts xxiv. 5.

The elevation of the hills on which the spectator stands in this ravine is very great; and the whole scene, when we saw it, was clothed with the most rich mountain blue colour that can be conceived. At this spot, on the right hand of the ravine, is shown the rock to which the men of Nazareth are supposed to have conducted our Lord, for the purpose of throwing him down. With the Testament in our hands, we endeavoured to examine the probabilities of the spot; and I confess there is nothing in it which excites a scruple of incredulity in my mind. The rock here is perpendicular for about fifty feet, down which space it would be easy to hurl a person who should be unawares brought to the summit; and his perishing would be a very certain consequence. That the spot might be at a considerable distance from the city is an idea not inconsistent with St. Luke's account; for the expression, "thrusting Jesus out of the city, and leading him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built," gives fair scope for imagining that in their rage and debate, the Nazarenes might, without originally intending his murder, press upon him for a considerable distance after they had quitted the synagogue. The distance, as already noticed, from modern Nazareth to the spot, is scarcely two miles; a space, which, in the fury of persecution, might soon be passed over. Or, should this appear too considerable, it is by no means certain but that Nazareth may at that time have extended through the principal part of the plain, which I have described as lying before the modern town. In this case, the distance passed over might not exceed a mile. I can see, therefore, no reason for thinking otherwise, than that this may be the real scene where our divine prophet Jesus received so great a dishonour from the men of his own country and of his own kindred."

Mr. Fisk, an American missionary, was at Nazareth in the autumn of 1823. His description corresponds generally with that of Mr. Jowett. He estimates

the population to be from three thousand to five thousand, viz. Greeks, three hundred or four hundred families; Turks, two hundred; Catholics, one hundred; Greek Catholics, forty or fifty; Maronites, twenty or thirty; say in all seven hundred houses. ¶ *That it might be fulfilled—by the prophets, &c.* The words here are not found in any of the books of the Old Testament; and there has been much difficulty in ascertaining the meaning of this passage. Some have supposed that Matthew meant to refer to Judg. xiii. 5, to Samson as a type of Christ; others that he refers to Isa. xi. 1, where the descendant of Jesse is called a Branch; in the Hebrew *Netzer*. Some have supposed that Matthew refers to some prophecy which was not recorded, but handed down by tradition. But these suppositions are not satisfactory. It is a great deal more probable that Matthew refers not to any particular place, but to the leading characteristics of the prophecies respecting him. The following remarks may make this clear. 1. He does not say, by the prophet, as in ch. i. 22; ii. 5, 15, but, *by the prophets*, meaning no one particularly, but the general character of the prophecies. 2. The leading and most prominent prophecies respecting him were, that he was to be of humble life; to be despised, and rejected. See Ps. xxii. Isa. liii., 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 12. 3. The phrase *he shall be called*, means the same as he shall be. 4. The character of the people of Nazareth was such that they were proverbially despised and contemned. John i. 46; vii. 52. To come from Nazareth, therefore, or to be a Nazarene, was the same as to be despised, and esteemed of low birth; to be a root out of dry ground, having no form or comeliness. And this was the same as had been predicted by the prophets. When Matthew says, therefore, that the prophecies were fulfilled, it means that the predictions of the prophets that he should be of humble life, and rejected, were fully accomplished in his being an inhabitant of Nazareth, and despised as such.



## CHAPTER III.

*John Baptist's preaching and manner of life, 1—6. Pharisees, &c., warned by John, 7—12. The baptism of Jesus, 13—15. First testimony from heaven to Jesus, 16, 17.*

## CHAPTER III.

1. *In those days.* The days here referred to cannot be those mentioned in the preceding chapter, for John was but six months older than Christ. Perhaps Matthew intended to extend his narrative to the whole time that Jesus dwelt at Nazareth; and the meaning is, "in those days while Jesus still dwelt at Nazareth," John began to preach. It is not probable that John began to baptize or preach long before the Saviour entered on his ministry; and, consequently, from the time that is mentioned at the close of the second chapter, to that mentioned in the beginning of the third, an interval of twenty-five or more years elapsed. ¶ *John the Baptist.* Or *John the baptiser*—so called from his principal office, that of baptizing. Baptism, or the application of water, was a rite well known to the Jews, and practised when they admitted proselytes to their religion from heathenism.—*Lightfoot.* ¶ *Preaching.* The word rendered to preach, means, to proclaim in the manner of a public crier; to make proclamation. The discourses recorded in the New Testament are mostly brief, sometimes only a single sentence. They were public proclamations of some great truth. Such appear to have been the discourses of John, calling men to repentance. ¶ *In the wilderness of Judæa.* This country was situated along the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, to the east of Jerusalem. The word translated wilderness, does not denote, as with us, a place of boundless forests, entirely destitute of inhabitants, but a mountainous, rough, and thinly settled country, covered, to some considerable extent, with forests and rocks, and better fitted for pasture than for tilling. There were inhabitants in those places, and even villages, but they were the comparatively unsettled portions of the country. 1 Sam. xxv. 1, 2. In the time of Joshua there were six cities in what was then called a wilderness. *Josh. xv 61, 62.*

2. *Repent ye.* Repentance implies

IN those days came<sup>1</sup> John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa,

2 And saying, Repent<sup>2</sup> ye : for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

<sup>1</sup> Luke III. 2. John I. 18. <sup>2</sup> Mark I. 4.

sorrow for past offences, 2 Cor. vii. 10 ; a deep sense of the evil of sin as committed against God, Ps. li. 4 ; and a full purpose to turn from transgression and to lead a holy life. A true penitent has sorrow for sin, not only because it is ruinous to his soul, but chiefly because it is an offence against God, and is that abominable thing which he hates. Jer. xlv. 4. It is produced by seeing the great danger and misery to which it exposes us ; by seeing the justness and holiness of God, Job xlii. 6 ; and by seeing that our sins have been committed against Christ, and were the cause of his death. Zech. xii. 10 ; Luke xxii. 61, 62. There are two words in the New Testament translated repentance ; one of which denotes a change of mind, or a reformation of life ; and the other sorrow or regret that sin has been committed. The word used here is the former : calling the Jews to a change of life, or a reformation of conduct. In the time of John, the nation had become extremely wicked and corrupt, perhaps more so than at any preceding period. Hence both he and Christ began their ministry by calling to repentance. ¶ *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.* The phrases, kingdom of heaven, kingdom of Christ, and kingdom of God, are of frequent occurrence in the bible. They all refer to the same thing. The expectation of such a kingdom was taken from the Old Testament, and especially from Daniel, ch. vii. 13, 14. The prophets had told of a successor to David that should sit on his throne. 1 Kings ii. 4 ; viii. 25 ; Jer. xxxiii. 17. The Jews expected a great national deliverer. They supposed that when the Messiah should appear, all the dead would be raised ; that the judgment would take place ; and that the enemies of the Jews would be destroyed, and themselves advanced to great national dignity and honour.

The language in which they were accustomed to describe this event was retained by our Saviour and his apostles. Yet they early attempted to correct the

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wil-

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xl. 3.

common notions respecting his reign. This was one design, doubtless, of John in preaching repentance. Instead of summoning them to military exercises, and collecting an army, which would have been in accordance with their expectations, he called them to a change of life; to the doctrine of repentance, a state of things far more accordant with the approach of a kingdom of purity.

The phrases kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven, have been supposed to have a considerable variety of meaning. Some have thought that they refer to the state of things in heaven; others, to the personal reign of Christ on earth; others, that they mean the church, or the reign of Christ in the hearts of his people. There can be no doubt that there is reference in the words to the condition of things in heaven, after this life. But the church of God is a preparatory state to that beyond the grave; a state in which Christ pre-eminently rules and reigns; and there is no doubt that it sometimes refers to the state of things in the church; and it means, therefore, the state of things which the Messiah was to set up, his spiritual reign begun in the church on earth, and completed in heaven.

The phrase would be translated "the reign of God draws near." We do not say commonly of a kingdom that it is moveable, or that it approaches. A reign may be said to be at hand; or the time when Christ would reign was at hand. In this sense it is meant that the time when Christ should reign, or set up his kingdom, or begin his dominion on earth, under the christian economy, was about to commence. The phrase, then, should not be confined to any period of that reign, but includes his whole dominion over his people on earth and in heaven.

In the passage here, it clearly means that the coming of the Messiah was near; or that the time of the reign of God which the Jews had expected was coming.

The word heaven, or heavens, as it is in the original, means *sometimes the place, so called; and sometimes, by a figure of*

derness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 And the same John had his<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kin. i. 8. Matt. xi. 8.

speech, it is put for the Great Being whose residence is there; as in Dan. iv. 26; "the heavens do rule." See also Mark xi. 30. Luke xv. 18. As that kingdom was one of purity, it was proper that the people should prepare themselves for it by turning from their sins, and directing their minds to a suitable fitness for his reign.

3. *The prophet Esaias.* The prophet Isaiah. Esaias is the Greek mode of writing the name. This passage is taken from Isa. xl. 3. It is here said to have been spoken in reference to John, the forerunner of Christ. The language is such as was familiar to the Jews, and such as they would understand. It was spoken at first with reference to the return from the captivity at Babylon. Anciently it was customary in the march of armies to send messengers, or pioneers, before them to proclaim their approach: to provide for them; to remove obstructions; to make roads, level hills, fill up valleys, &c. Isaiah, describing the return from Babylon, uses language taken from that custom. A crier, or herald, is introduced. In the vast deserts that lay between Babylon and Judea, he is represented as lifting up his voice, and, with authority, commanding a public road to be made for the return of the captive Jews, with the Lord as their deliverer. 'Prepare his ways, make them straight;' or, as Isaiah adds, "Let the valleys be exalted, or filled up, and the hills be levelled, and a straight, level highway be prepared, that they may march with ease and safety." See my Notes on Isa. xl.

As applied to John, it means, that he was sent to remove obstructions, and to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah; like a herald going before an army on the march, to make preparations for their coming.

4. *His raiment of camel's hair.* His clothing. This is not the fine hair of the camel from which our elegant cloth is made, called camel; nor the more elegant stuff, brought from the East Indies, under the name of camel's hair.

raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts<sup>1</sup> and wild honey.

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xi. 12.

but the long, shaggy hair of the camel, from which a coarse, cheap cloth is made, still worn by the poorer classes in the east, and by monks. This dress of the camel's hair, and a leathern girdle, it seems, was the common dress of the prophets. 2 Kin. i. 8. Zech. xiii. 4. ¶ *His meat was locusts.* His food. These constituted the food of the common people. Among the Greeks, the vilest of the people used to eat them; and the fact that John made his food of them is significant of his great poverty and humble life. The Jews were allowed to eat them. Lev. xi. 22. Locusts are flying insects, and are of various kinds. The green locusts are about two inches in length, and about the thickness of a man's finger. The common brown locust is about three inches long. The general form and appearance of the locust is not unlike the grasshopper. They were one of the plagues of Egypt. Exod. x. 4—15. In eastern countries they are very numerous. They appear in such quantities as to darken the sky, and devour in a short time every green thing. The whole earth is sometimes covered with them for many leagues. Isa. xxxiii. 4, 5; Joel i. 4. "Some species of the locust are eaten at this day in eastern countries, and are even esteemed a delicacy when properly cooked. After their legs and wings are torn off, they are stuck on wooden spits and roasted at the fire, and then devoured with great zest. There are also other ways of preparing them; for example, they are cooked and dressed in oil; or, having been pulverised, when other food is scarce, bread is made of the meal thus prepared. The Bedouins pack them with salt, in close masses, which they carry in their leathern sacks. From these they cut slices as they may need them. It is singular that even learned men have suffered themselves to hesitate about understanding these passages of the literal locust, when the fact that these are eaten by the orientals is so abundantly proved by the concurrent testimony of travellers. One of them says, they are brought to market on strings in all the cities of

5 Then went out to him<sup>2</sup> Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 7—12. Luke iii. 7—14.

Arabia, and that he saw an Arab on mount Samara, who had collected a sack full of them. They are prepared in different ways. An Arab in Egypt, of whom he requested that he would immediately eat locusts in his presence, threw them upon the glowing coals; and after he supposed they were roasted enough, he took them by the legs and head, and devoured the remainder at one mouthful. When the Arabs have them in quantities, they roast or dry them in an oven, or boil them and eat them with salt. The Arabs in the kingdom of Morocco boil the locusts; and the Bedouins eat locusts, which are collected in great quantities in the beginning of April, when they are easily caught. After having been roasted a little upon the iron plate on which bread is baked, they are dried in the sun, and then put into large sacks, with the mixture of a little salt. They are never served up as a dish, but every one takes a handful of them when hungry."—See *Dictionaries of the Bible*. Art. *Locust*. ¶ *Wild honey.* This was probably the honey found in the rocks in the wilderness. Palestine was often called the land flowing with milk and honey. Exod. iii. 8, 17; xiii. 5. Bees were kept with great care; and great numbers of them abounded in the fissures of trees and the clefts of rocks. There is also a species of honey called wild-honey, or wood-honey. 1 Sam. xiv. 27, margin; or honey-dew, which is produced by certain little insects, and deposited on the leaves of trees, and flows from them in great quantities to the ground. See 1 Sam. xiv. 24—27. This is said to be produced still in Arabia; and perhaps it was this which John lived upon.

5. *Jerusalem.* The people of Jerusalem. ¶ *All Judaea.* Many people from Judea. It does not mean that literally all the people went, but that great multitudes went. The going was general. Jerusalem was in the part of the country called Judea. Judea was situated on the west side of the Jordan. See Note Matt. i. 22. ¶ *Region about Jordan.* On the east and west side of the river. Near to Jordan.

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing<sup>1</sup> their sins.

<sup>1</sup> Acts I. 5; II. 38; xix. 4, 5, 18.

6. *Were baptized.* The word baptize signifies originally to tinge, to dye, to stain, as those who dye clothes. It here means to cleanse or wash anything by the application of water. See Note, Mark vii.

4. *Washing, or ablution,* was much in use among the Jews, as one of the rites of their religion, Num. xix. 7; Heb. ix. 10. It was not customary, however, among them to baptize those who were converted to the Jewish religion until after the Babylonian captivity. At the time of John, and for some time previous, they had been accustomed to administer a rite of baptism, or washing, to those who became proselytes to their religion; that is, who were converted from being Gentiles.\* This was done to signify that they renounced the errors and worship of the Pagans, and as significant of their becoming pure by embracing a new religion. It was a solemn rite of washing, significant of cleansing from their former sins, and purifying them for the peculiar service of Jehovah. John found this custom in use; and as he was calling the Jews to a new dispensation, to a change in their form of religion, he administered this rite of baptism, or washing, to signify the cleansing from their sins, and adopting the new dispensation, or the fitness for the pure reign of the Messiah. They applied an old ordinance to a new purpose. As it was used by John it was a significant rite, or ceremony, intended to denote the putting away of impurity, and a purpose to be pure in heart and life. The Hebrew word *Tabal*, which is rendered by the word baptize, occurs in the Old Testament in the following places: viz. Gen. xxxvii. 31; Exod. xii. 22; Lev. iv. 6; ix. 9; xiv. 6, 51; Num. xix. 18; Deut. xxxiii. 24; Josh. iii. 15; Ruth ii. 14; 1 Sam. xiv. 27; 2 Kin. v. 14; viii. 15; Job ix. 31; Ezek. xxiii. 15. It occurs in no other places; and from a careful examination of these passages, its meaning among the Jews is to be derived. From these passages it will be seen that its radical meaning is not to sprinkle, or to immerse. It is to dip, commonly for the purpose of sprin-

klings, or for some other purpose. Thus, to dip the finger, i. e. a part of the finger, in blood—enough to sprinkle with, Lev. iv. 6. To dip a living bird, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop, in the blood of the bird that was killed, for the purpose of sprinkling; where it could not be that all these should be immersed in the blood of a single bird. To dip hyssop in the water, to sprinkle with, Num. xix. 18. To dip a portion of bread in vinegar, Ruth ii. 14. To dip the feet in oil—an emblem of plenty, Deut. xxxiii. 24. To dye, or stain, Ezek. xxiii. 15. To plunge into a ditch, so as to defile the clothes, Job ix. 31. To dip the end of a staff in honey, 1 Sam. xiv. 27. To dip in Jordan—a declaration respecting Naaman the Syrian, 2 Kin. v. 14. The direction of the prophet was to wash himself, ver. 10. This shows that he understood washing and baptizing to mean the same thing. To dip a towel, or quilt, so as to spread it on the face of a man to smother him, 2 Kin. viii. 15. In none of these cases can it be shown that the meaning of the word is to immerse entirely. But in nearly all the cases, the notion of applying the water to a part only of the person or object, though it was by dipping, is necessarily to be supposed.

In the New Testament the word, in various forms, occurs eighty times; fifty-seven with reference to persons. Of these fifty-seven times, it is followed by "in," *εν*, eighteen times, as in water, in the desert, in Jordan; nine times by "into," *εἰς*, as into the name, &c., into Christ; once it is followed by *εἰς*, Acts ii. 38; and twice by "for," *υπερ*, 1 Cor. xv. 29.

The following remarks may be made in view of the investigation of the meaning of this word. 1. That in baptism it is possible, perhaps probable, that the notion of dipping would be the one that would occur to a Jew. 2. It would not occur to him that the word meant of necessity to dip entirely, or completely to immerse. 3. The notion of washing would be the one which would most readily occur, as connected with a religious rite. See the cases of Naaman,

\* This has been questioned. See Dr. Gill on *recelyte Baptism*.—*Editor*.

## 7 ¶ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come

and Mark vii. 4, *Greek*. 4. It cannot be proved from an examination of the passages in the Old and New Testaments, that the idea of a complete immersion ever was connected with the word, or that it ever in any case occurred. If they went into the water, still it is not proved by that, that the only mode of baptism was by immersion, as it might have been by pouring, though they were in the water. 5. It is not positively enjoined anywhere in the New Testament that the only mode of baptism shall be by an entire submersion of the body under water. Without such a precept, it cannot be made obligatory on people of all ages, nations, and climes, even if it were probable that in the mild climate of Judea it was the usual mode.\*

The river Jordan is the eastern boundary of Palestine or Judea. It rises in Mount Lebanon, on the north of Palestine, and runs in a southerly direction, under ground, for thirteen miles, and then bursts forth with a great noise at Cesarea Philippi. It then unites with two small streams, and runs some miles farther, and empties into the lake Merom. From this small lake it flows thirteen miles, and then falls into the lake Genesareth, otherwise called the sea of Tiberias, or the sea of Galilee. Through the middle of this lake, which is fifteen miles long and from six to nine broad, it flows undisturbed and preserves a southerly direction for about seventy miles, and then falls into the Dead Sea.

The Jordan, at its entrance into the Dead Sea, is about ninety feet wide. It flows in many places with great rapidity, and when swollen by rains pours like an impetuous torrent. In former time it regularly overflowed its banks in time of harvest, that is, in March, in some places six hundred paces; Josh. iii. 15; 1 Chron. xii. 15. These banks are covered with small trees and shrubs, and afford a convenient dwelling for wild beasts. Allusion is often made to these thickets in the sacred scriptures, Jer. xlix. 19; 1. 44.

7. *Pharisees and Sadducees.* The Jews were divided into three great sects, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes.

\* Men of great learning and piety question both the criticisms and the conclusions of the excellent commentator.—Editor.

In addition to these, some smaller sects are mentioned in the New Testament, and by Josephus: the Herodians, probably political friends of Herod; the Galileans, a branch of the Pharisees; and the Therapeutæ, a branch of the Essenes, but converts from the Greeks. The principal of these sects are supposed to have originated about one hundred and fifty years before Christ, as they are mentioned by Josephus in his history as existing about that time. Of course nothing is said of them in the Old Testament, as that was finished about four hundred years before the Christian era.

The Pharisees were the most numerous and wealthy sect of the Jews. They derived their name from the Hebrew word *Pharash*, which signifies to set apart, or to separate, because they separated themselves from the rest of their countrymen, and professedly devoted themselves to peculiar strictness in religion. Their leading tenets were the following:—that the world was governed by fate, or by a fixed decree of God; that the souls of men were immortal, and were either eternally happy or miserable beyond the grave; that the dead would be raised; that there were angels, good and bad; that God was under obligation to bestow peculiar favour on the Jews; and that they were justified by the merits of Abraham, or by their own conformity to the law. They were proud, haughty, self-righteous, and held the common people in great disrespect, John vii. 49. They sought the offices of the state, and affected great dignity. They were ostentatious in their religious worship, praying in the corners of the streets, and seeking publicity in the bestowment of alms. They sought principally external cleanliness; and dealt much in ceremonial ablutions and washing.

Some of the laws of Moses they maintained very strictly. In addition to the written law, they held numerous other laws which they maintained had come down from Moses by tradition. These they felt themselves as much bound to observe as the written law. Under the influence of these laws, they washed themselves before meals with great scrupulousness. They fasted twice a week—on Thursday, when they supposed Moses ascended

to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation<sup>1</sup> of vipers, who hath

warned you to<sup>2</sup> flee from the wrath to come?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 34; xxiii. 33. Isa. lix. 5. Luke iii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. ii. 6. Rom. i. 18.

Mount Sinai, and on Monday when he descended. They wore broad phylacteries, and enlarged the fringe or borders of their garments; they loved the chief rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. They were in general a corrupt, hypocritical, office-seeking, haughty class of men. There are, however, some honourable exceptions recorded, Acts v. 34. Perhaps also, Mar. xv. 43; Luke ii. 23; xxiii. 51; John. xix. 38.

II. The Sadducees are supposed to have taken their name from Sadok, who flourished about two hundred and sixty years before the christian era. He was a pupil of Antigonus Sochemus, president of the Sanhedrim, or Great Council of the nation, who had taught the duty of serving God disinterestedly, without the hope of reward, or the fear of punishment. Sadok, not properly understanding the doctrine of his master, drew the inference that there was no future state of rewards or punishments; and on this belief he founded the sect. The other notions which they held, all to be traced to this leading doctrine, were: 1. That there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, Matt. xxii. 23; Acts xxiii. 8; and that the soul of man perishes with the body. 2. They rejected the doctrine of fate. 3. They rejected all traditions, and professed to receive only the books of the Old Testament.

They were far less numerous than the Pharisees, but their want of numbers was compensated, in some degree, by their wealth and standing in society. Though they did not generally seek office, yet several of them were advanced to the high-priesthood.

III. The Essenes, a third sect of the Jews, are not mentioned in the New Testament. They differed from both the Pharisees and Sadducees. They were jewish monks or hermits, passing their time little in society, but mostly in places of obscurity and retirement. It is not probable, therefore, that our Saviour often encountered them, if he ever did; and this, it is supposed, is the reason why they are not mentioned in the New Testament.

They were a contemplative sect, having little to do with the common business of life. The property which they possessed they held in common. They denied themselves generally the usual comforts of life, and were exceedingly strict in the observance of the duties of religion. They were generally more pure than the rest of the Jews, and appear to have been an unambitious, a modest, and retiring sort of people. The two sexes were not in company, except on the sabbath, when they partook of their coarse fare, bread and salt only, together. They practised dancing in their worship. Few of them were married; they were opposed to oaths; and asserted that slavery was repugnant to nature. In regard to doctrine, they did not differ materially from the Pharisees, except that they objected to the sacrifices of slain animals, and of course did not visit the temple, and were not, therefore, likely to come into public contact with the Saviour. They perpetuated their sect by proselytes, and by taking orphan children to train up.

The other sects of the Jews were too insignificant to demand any particular notice here. It may be said of the Jews generally that they possessed little of the spirit of religion; that they had corrupted some of the most important doctrines of the bible; and that they were an ignorant, proud, ambitious, and sensual people. There was great propriety, therefore, in John's proclaiming the necessity of repentance.

7. *Generation of vipers.* Vipers are a species of serpents. They are from two to five feet in length, and about an inch thick, with a flat head. They are of an ash or yellowish colour, speckled with long brown spots. There is no serpent that is more poisonous in its bite than vipers. The person bitten swells almost immediately, and falls down dead. See Acts xxviii. 6. The word serpent, or viper, is used to denote both cunning and malignancy. In the phrase, "Wise as serpents," Matt. x. 16, the meaning is, be prudent, or wise, referring to the account in Gen. iii. 1—6. Among the Jews the serpent was regarded as the symbol

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.<sup>1</sup>

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father:<sup>2</sup> for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones<sup>3</sup> to raise up children unto Abraham.

<sup>1</sup> Or, answerable to amendment of life. Jer. vii. 3-7. xxvi. 13. <sup>2</sup> Rom. iv. 4. <sup>3</sup> Isa. lxiii. 16.

of cunning, circumspection, and prudence. He was so regarded in the Egyptian hieroglyphics. In the phrase, "Generation of vipers," Matt. xii. 34, the viper is the symbol of wickedness, of envenomed malice, a symbol drawn from the venom of the serpent. It is not quite certain in which of these senses the phrase is used in this place; probably to denote malignancy and wickedness. See Matt. xii. 34; xxiii. 33. *Wrath to come.* John expresses his astonishment that sinners so hardened and so hypocritical as they were should have been induced to flee from coming wrath. *The wrath to come* means the divine indignation, or the punishment that will come on the guilty. See 1 Thess. i. 10; ii. 16; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

8. *Bring forth, therefore, fruits, &c.* That is, the proper fruits of reformation, the proper evidence that you are sincere. Do not bring your cunning and dissimulation to this work; carry not your hypocrisy into your professed repentance; but evince your sincerity by forsaking sins, and thus give evidence that this crowding to Jordan is not some act of dissimulation. No discourse could have been more appropriate or more cutting. *Fruits.* Conduct. See Matt. vii. 16-19. *Meet for repentance.* Fit for repentance; appropriate to it; the proper expression of repentance.

9. *And think not to say, &c.* They regarded it as sufficient righteousness that they were descended from so holy a man as Abraham. They deemed it as such an honour that it would go far to justify all his descendants. John viii. 53-57. 53. John assured them that this was a matter of small consequence in the sight of God. Of the very stones of the Jordan he could raise up children to Abraham. *The meaning seems to be this:* God, from these stones, could more easily

10 And now also the axe<sup>4</sup> is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is<sup>5</sup> hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water<sup>6</sup> unto repentance: but he that

<sup>4</sup> Luke xiii. 6, 7. <sup>5</sup> John xv. 6. <sup>6</sup> Luke iii. 16. Acts xix. 4.

raise up those who should be worthy children of Abraham, or be like him, then simply, because you are descendants of Abraham, make you, who are proud and hypocritical, subjects of the Messiah's kingdom. Or, mere nativity, or the privileges of birth, avail nothing where there is not righteousness of life. Some have supposed, however, that by these stones he meant the Roman soldiers, or the heathen, who might also have attended on his ministry; and that God could of them raise up children to Abraham.

10. *The axe is laid at the root of the trees.* Laying the axe at the root of a tree is intended to denote that the tree is to be cut down. It was not merely to be trimmed, to be cut about the limbs, but the very tree itself was to be struck. That is, a searching, trying kind of preaching has been commenced. A kingdom of justice is to be set up. Principles and conduct are to be investigated. No art, no dissimulation, will be successful. Men are to be tried by their lives, not by birth or profession. They who are not found to bear this test, are to be rejected. The very root shall feel the blow, and the fruitless tree shall fall. This is a beautiful and very striking figure of speech, and a direct threatening of future wrath. John regarded the people before him as making a fair and promising profession, as trees do in blossom. But he told them, also, that they should bear fruit as well as flowers. Their professions of repentance were not enough. They should show, by a holy life, that their profession was genuine.

11. *Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.* The word here translated shoes, has a signification different from what it has in our language. At first, in order to keep the feet from the sharp stones, or the burning sand, small pieces of wood were fastened to the soles of the feet,

ometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you<sup>1</sup> with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lv. 4. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2-4. Acts i. 5.

called sandals. Leather or skins of beasts dressed, afterwards were used. The foot was not covered at all; but the sandal, or piece of leather, or wood, was bound by thongs.

The people put off these sandals when they entered a house, and put them on when they left it. To loose and bind on sandals, on such occasions, was the business of the lowest servants; and their office was, to loose and carry about their masters' sandals. The expression here, then, was an expression of great humility; and John says that he was not worthy to be the servant of him who should come after him. ¶ *Shall baptize you.* Shall send upon you the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is frequently represented as being poured out upon his people. Prov. i. 23; Isa. xlv. 3; Joel ii. 28, 29; Acts ii. 17, 18. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the same, therefore, as the sending of his influences to convert, purify, and guide the soul. ¶ *The Holy Ghost.* The third person of the adorable Trinity, whose office it is to enlighten, renew, sanctify, and comfort the soul. He was promised by the Saviour to convince of sin; John xvi. 8. To enlighten or teach the disciples; John xiv. 26; xvi. 13. To comfort them in the absence of the Saviour; John xiv. 18; xvi. 7. To change the heart; Titus iii. 5. To be baptized with the Holy Ghost means that the Messiah would send upon the world a far more powerful and mighty influence than had attended the preaching of John. Many more would be converted. A mighty change would take place. His ministry would not affect the external life only, but the heart, the motives, the soul; and produce rapid and permanent changes in the lives of men. See Acts ii. 17, 18. ¶ *With fire.* This expression has been very variously understood. Some have supposed that John refers to the afflictions and persecutions with which men would

and he will thoroughly purge<sup>2</sup> his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff<sup>3</sup> with unquenchable fire.

13 ¶ Then cometh Jesus from

<sup>2</sup> Mal. iii. 2. 3. <sup>3</sup> Psa. i. 4. Mal. iv. 1. Mark ix. 44.

be tried under the gospel; others, that the word fire means judgment or wrath. A part of his hearers he would baptize with the Holy Ghost, but the wicked with fire and vengeance. Fire is a symbol of vengeance. See Isa. v. 24; lxi. 2; lxvi. 24. If this be the meaning, as seems to be probable, then John says that the ministry of the Messiah would be far more powerful than his was. It would be more searching and trying; and they who were not fitted to abide the test, would be cast into eternal fire. Some have supposed, however, that by fire, here, he intends to denote that the Messiah's ministry would be refining, powerful, purifying, as fire is sometimes an emblem of purity; Mal. iii. 2. It is difficult to ascertain the precise meaning further than that his ministry would be very trying, purifying, searching. Multitudes would be converted; and those who were not true penitents would not be able to abide the trial, and should be driven away.

12. *His fan.* It seems probable that this was some portable instrument, made of light, so that it might be easily carried about. The fan is a well-known agricultural instrument which was used by the Jews, as it is at the present day, to separate grain from the chaff. The usual custom was to throw the grain in the air by means of a large shovel, and suffer the wind to drive the chaff away, but it is probable that the fan was often employed. See my Note on Isa. xxx. 24. ¶ *His floor.* The threshing floor was an open space, or arena, in the field, usually on an elevated part of the land. Gen. i. 10. It had no covering or walls. It was a space of ground thirty or forty paces in diameter, and made smooth by rolling it, or treading it hard. A high place was selected for the purpose of keeping it dry, and for the convenience of winnowing the grain by the wind. The grain was usually trodden out by oxen. Sometimes it was beaten with flails, as



Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized<sup>1</sup> of him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said

<sup>1</sup> Mark i. 9. Luke iii. 21.

with us; and sometimes with a sharp threshing instrument, made to roll over the grain, and to cut the straw at the same time. Isa. xli. 15. After being threshed it was winnowed. The grain was then separated from the dirt and coarse chaff by a sieve, and then still further cleansed by a fan, an instrument to produce an artificial wind. This method is still practised in eastern nations. ¶ *Shall purge.* Shall cleanse, or purify. Shall remove the chaff, &c. ¶ *The garner.* The granary, or place to deposit the wheat. ¶ *Unquenchable fire.* Fire that shall not be extinguished, that will utterly consume it. By the floor, here, is represented the Jewish people. By the wheat, the righteous, or the people of God. By the chaff, the wicked. They are often represented as being driven away like chaff before the wind. Job xxi. 18; Psa. i. 4; Isa. xvii. 13; Hos. xiii. 3. They are also represented as chaff which the fire consumes. Isa. v. 24. This image is often used to express judgments. Isa. xli. 15. "Thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." By the unquenchable fire is meant the eternal suffering of the wicked in hell. Matt. xxv. 41; Mark ix. 48; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

14. *John forbad him.* Refused him. ¶ *I have need.* It is more fit that I should be baptized with thy baptism, the Holy Ghost, than that thou shouldst be baptized in water by me. I am a sinner, and unworthy to administer baptism to the Messiah.

15. *Thus it becometh us.* It is fit and proper. And though you may feel yourself unworthy, yet it is proper it should be done. ¶ *All righteousness.* There was no particular precept in the Old Testament requiring this, but he chose to give the sanction of his example to the baptism of John, as to a divine ordinance. The phrase, *all righteousness*, here, is the same as *a righteous institution or appointment.*

unto him. Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were

Jesus had no sin. But he was about to enter on his great work. It was proper that he should be set apart by his forerunner, and show his connexion with him, and give his approbation to what John had done. Also, he was baptized that occasion might be taken, at the commencement of his work, for God publicly to declare his approbation of him, and his solemn appointment to the office of the Messiah.

16. *Out of the water.* This shows that he had descended to the river. It literally means, he went up directly from the water. The original does not imply that they had descended into the river. ¶ *The heavens were opened unto him.* This was done while he was praying. Luke iii. 21. The sacred ordinance of baptism he attended with prayer. The ordinances of religion will be commonly ineffectual without prayer. If in those ordinances we look to God, we may expect he will bless us; the heavens will be opened; light will shine upon our path; and we shall meet with the approbation of God. The expression, the heavens were opened, is one that commonly denotes the appearance of the clouds when it lightens. The heavens appear to open, or give way. Something of this kind probably appeared to John at this time. The same appearance took place at Stephen's death. Acts vii. 56. The expression means, he was permitted to see far into the heavens beyond what the natural vision would allow. ¶ *To him.* Some have referred this to Jesus, others to John. It probably refers to John. See John i. 33. It was a testimony given to John that this was the Messiah. ¶ *He saw.* John saw. ¶ *The spirit of God.* See v. 11. This was the third person of the Trinity, descending upon him in the form of a dove. Luke iii. 22. The dove, among the Jews, was the symbol of purity or harmlessness, Matt. x. 16, and of swiftness, Psa. lv. 6. The form

opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God<sup>1</sup> descending like a dove, and lighting upon him :

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xl. 2; xlii. 1; lxi. 1. John iii. 34.

chosen here was doubtless an emblem of the innocence, meekness, and tenderness of the Saviour. The gift of the Holy Spirit, in this manner, was the public approbation of Jesus, John i. 33, and a sign of his being set apart to the office of the Messiah. We are not to suppose that there was any change wrought in the moral character of Jesus, but only that he was publicly set apart to his work, and solemnly approved by God in the office to which he was appointed.

17. *A voice from Heaven.* A voice from God. Probably this was heard by all who were present. This voice, or sound, was repeated on the mount of transfiguration. Matt. xvii. 5. Luke ix. 35, 36. 2 Pet. i. 17. It was also heard just before his death, and was then supposed by many to be thunder. John xii. 28—30. It was a public declaration that Jesus was the Messiah. ¶ *My beloved Son.* This is the title which God himself gave to Jesus. It denotes the nearness of his relation to God, and the love of God for him. Heb. i. 1. It implies that he was equal with God. John x. 29—33; xix. 7. Heb. i. 5, 6, 7, 8. The term Son is expressive of love; of the nearness of his relation to God, and of his dignity and equality with God. ¶ *Am well pleased.* Am ever delighted. It implies that he was constantly or uniformly well pleased with him; and in this solemn and public manner he expressed his approbation of him as the Redeemer of the world.

The baptism of Jesus has usually been considered a striking manifestation of the doctrine of the trinity, or the doctrine that there are three persons in the divine nature. 1. There is the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, baptized in the Jordan, elsewhere declared to be equal with God, John x. 30. 2. The Holy Spirit descending in a bodily form upon the Saviour. The Holy Spirit is also equal with the Father, or is also God, Acts v. 3, 4. 3. The Father, addressing the Son, and declaring that he was well pleased with him. It is impossible to

17 And lo<sup>2</sup> a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved<sup>3</sup> Son in whom I am well pleased.

<sup>2</sup> John v. 36, 37; xii. 28—30. <sup>3</sup> Psal. li. 7. Luke ix. 35. Eph. i. 6. 3 Pet. i. 17.

explain this transaction consistently in any other way than by supposing that there are three equal persons in the divine nature or essence, and that each of these sustains important parts in the work of redeeming men.

In the preaching of John the Baptist we are presented with an example of a faithful minister of God. Neither the wealth, dignity, nor power of his auditors, deterred him from fearlessly declaring the truth respecting their character. He called things by their right names. He did not apologize for their sin. He set it fairly before his hearers, and denounced the appropriate curse. No should all ministers of the gospel. Rank, riches, and power should have nothing to do in shaping and ganging their ministry. In respectful terms, but without shrinking, all the truths of the gospel must be spoken, or woe will follow the ambassador of Christ.

In John we have also an example of humility. Blessed with great success; attended by the great and noble, and with nothing but principle to keep him from turning it to his advantage; he still kept himself out of view, and pointed to a far greater Personage at hand. So should every minister of Jesus, however successful, keep the Lamb of God in his eye, and be willing, nay he should rejoice to lay all his success and honours at his feet.

Everything about the work of Jesus was wonderful. No person had before come into the world under such circumstances. God would not have attended the commencement of his life with such wonderful events if it had not been of the greatest moment to our race, and if he had not possessed a dignity above all prophets, kings, and priests. He was the Redeemer of men, the mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of peace, Isa. ix. 6, and it was proper that a voice from heaven should declare it, that the angels should attend him, and the Holy Ghost signalize his bap-

CHAPTER IV.

*Christ's fast and temptations in the wilderness, 1—11. Jesus dwells at Capernaum, 12—16. Jesus begins to preach, and calls certain disciples, 18—22. Christ's preaching and miracles in Galilee.*

**T**HEN was Jesus led up of <sup>1</sup> the Spirit into the wilderness to be <sup>2</sup> tempted of the devil.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kin. xviii. 12. Ezek. xi. 1, 24. Acts viii. 39. <sup>2</sup> Mark i. 12. Luke iv. 1.

tism by his personal presence. And it is proper that we, for whom he came, should give to him our undivided affections, our time, our influence, our hearts, and our lives.

CHAPTER IV.

1, 2. *The wilderness.* See Note, Matt. iii. 1. ¶ *The Spirit.* Luke says, ch. iv. 1, that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit. It was by his influence, therefore, that Christ went into the desert. ¶ *To be tempted.* The word to tempt, in the original, means to try, to endeavour, to attempt to do a thing; then, to try the nature of a thing, as metals by fire; then to test moral qualities by trying them, to see how they will endure; then, to endeavour to draw men away from virtue by suggesting motives of evil. This is the meaning here, and this is now the established meaning of the word in the English language. ¶ *The devil.* This word originally means an adversary, or an accuser; thence any one opposed; thence an enemy of any kind. It is given in the scriptures, by way of eminence, to the leader of evil angels—a being characterized as full of subtlety, envy, art, and hatred of mankind. He is known, also, by the name of Satan, Job i. 6—12; Matt. xii. 26. Beelzebub, Matt. xii. 24. The old serpent, Rev. xii. 9; and the Prince of the power of the air, Eph. ii. 2. The name is sometimes given to men and women, 2 Tim. iii. 3. Truce-breakers, slanderers—in the original, devils, 1 Tim. iii. 11. So must their wives be grave, not slanderers—in the original, devils.

2. *Had fasted.* Abstained from food. ¶ *Forty days and nights.* It has been questioned by some whether Christ abstained wholly from food, or only from bread, and the food to which he was accustomed. Luke says, ch. iv. 2, that he ate nothing. This settles the question.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4 But he answered and said, It is written,<sup>3</sup> Man shall not live by

<sup>3</sup> Deut. viii. 3.

Mark says, ch. i. 13, that angels came and ministered unto him. At first view this would seem to imply that he did as during that time. But Mark does not mention the time when the angels performed the office of kindness, and we are at liberty to suppose that he meant to say that it was done at the close of the forty days; and the rather as Matthew, after giving an account of the temptation, says the same thing. There are other instances of persons fasting forty days, recorded in the scriptures. Thus Moses fasted forty days, Exod. xxxiv. 28. Elijah, also fasted the same length of time, 1 Kin. xix. 8. In these cases they were no doubt miraculously supported.

3. *The tempter.* The devil, or Satan. See ver. 1. ¶ *If thou be the Son of God.* If thou art the Messiah—if God's own Son—then thou hast power to work a miracle, and here is a fit opportunity to try thy power, and show that thou art truly his Son. ¶ *Command that thou stones, &c.* The stones that were lying around him in the wilderness. No temptation could have been more plausible, or more likely to succeed, than this. He had just been declared to be the Son of God, ch. iii. 17, and here was an opportunity to show that he was really so. The circumstances were such as to make it appear plausible and proper to work this miracle. ¶ *'Here you are,'* was the language of Satan, 'hungry, cast out, alone, needy, poor, and yet the Son of God! If you have this power, how easy could you satisfy your wants! How foolish is it, then, for the Son of God, having all power, to be starving in this manner, when by a word he could show his power, and relieve his wants, and when in the thing itself there could be nothing wrong!'

4. But he answered and said, &c. In

bread alone,<sup>1</sup> but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth<sup>2</sup> of God.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiv. 16—21. Exod. xvi. 4—8. 1 Kin. xvii. 1—7. <sup>2</sup> Or, *by everything which God is pleased to appoint.*

Reply to this artful temptation, Christ answered by a quotation from the Old Testament. The place is found in Deut. viii. 3. In that place the discourse is respecting manna. Moses says that the Lord humbled the people, and fed them with manna, an unusual kind of food, that they might learn that man did not live by bread only, but that there were other things to support life, and that every thing which God had commanded was proper for this. The term *word*, used in this place, means very often, in Hebrew, thing, and clearly in this place it has that meaning. Neither Moses nor our Saviour had any reference to spiritual food, or to the doctrines necessary to support the faith of believers; but they simply meant that God could support life by other things than bread; that man was to live, not by that only, but by every other thing which proceeded out of his mouth; that is, which he chose to command men to eat. The substance of his answer, then, is: It is not so imperiously necessary that I should have bread, as to make a miracle proper to procure it. Life depends on the will of God. He can support it in other ways, as well as by bread. He has created other things to be eaten, and man may live by every thing that his Maker has commanded. And from this temptation we may learn, 1. That Satan often takes advantage of our circumstances and wants to tempt us. The poor, and hungry, and naked, he often tempts to repine and complain, and to be dishonest in order to supply their necessities. 2. Satan's temptations are often the strongest immediately after we have been remarkably favoured. Jesus had just been called the Son of God, and Satan took this opportunity to try him. He often attempts to fill us with pride and vain self-conceit, when we have been favoured with any peace of mind, or any new view of God, and endeavours to urge us to do something which may bring us low and lead us to sin. 3. His temptations are

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city,<sup>3</sup> and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, If thou

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xxvii. 53; Neh. xi. 1.

plausible. They often seem only urging us to do what is good and proper. They seem even to urge us to promote the glory of God, and to honour him. We are not to think, therefore, that because a thing may seem to be good in itself, that therefore it is to be done. Some of Satan's most powerful temptations are when he seems to be urging us to do what shall be for the glory of God. 4. We are to meet the temptations of Satan, as the Saviour did, with the plain and positive declarations of scripture. We are to inquire whether the thing is commanded, and whether, therefore, it is right to do it, and not trust to our own feelings, or even our wishes, in the matter.

5. *Taketh him up.* This does not mean that he bore him through the air, or that he compelled him to go against his will, or that he wrought a miracle, in any way, to place him there. There is no evidence that Satan had power to do any of these things; and the word translated *taketh him up* does not imply any such thing. It means to conduct one; to lead one; to attend or accompany one; or to induce one to go. It is used in the following places in the same sense. Num. xxiii. 14: "And he, Balak, brought him, Balaam, into the field of Tophim," &c.; that is, he led him, or induced him to go there. Matt. xvii. 1: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James," &c.; i. e. led, or conducted them—not by any means implying that he bore them by force. Matt. xx. 17: "Jesus, going to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart," &c. See also Matt. xxvi. 37; xxvii. 27. Mark v. 40. From these passages, and many more, it appears that all that is meant here is, that Satan conducted Jesus, or accompanied him; but not that this was done against the will of Jesus. ¶ *The holy city.* Jerusalem, called holy because the temple was there, and it was the place of religious solemnities. ¶ *Setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple.* It is not perfectly certain to what part of the temple

be the Son of God, cast thyself down : for it is written,<sup>1</sup> He shall give his angels charge concerning thee : and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xci. 11, 12.

the sacred writer here refers. It has been supposed by some that he means the roof. But Josephus says that the roof was covered by spikes of gold, to prevent its being polluted by birds ; and such a place would have been very inconvenient to stand upon. Others suppose that it was the top of the porch or entrance to the temple. But it is more than probable that the porch leading to the temple was not so high as the main building. It is more probable that he refers to a part of the sacred edifice sometimes called Solomon's porch. The temple was built on the top of mount Moriah ; and, together with its courts and porches, occupied a large space of ground. See Note, Matt. xxi. 12. To secure a level spot sufficiently large, it was necessary to put up a high wall on the east. The temple was surrounded with porches or piazzas fifty-five feet broad, and seventy-five high. The porch on the south side was, however, sixty-seven feet broad, and one hundred and fifty high. From the top of this to the bottom of the valley below was more than seven hundred feet, and Josephus says that one could scarcely look down without dizziness. The word pinnacle does not quite express the force of the original, which uses a word given usually to birds, denoting wings, or any thing in the form of wings. The name was given to the roof of this porch because it resembled a bird dropping its wings. It was on this place, doubtless, that Christ was placed.

Satan proposed that he should cast himself down thence ; and if he was the Son of God, he said it could do no harm. There was a promise that he should be protected. This promise was taken from Psa. xci. 11, 12.

To this passage of scripture Christ replied with another, which forbade the act. This is taken from Deut. vi. 16 ; "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." That *is*, thou shalt not try him ; or, thou shalt

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.\*

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms

\* Deut. vi. 16.

not, by throwing thyself into voluntary and uncommanded dangers, appeal to God for protection, or trifle with the promises made by those who are thrown into danger by his providence. It is true, indeed, that God aids those of his people who are placed by him in trial or danger ; but it is not true that the promise was meant to extend to those who wantonly provoke him, and trifle with the promised help. Thus Satan, artfully using and perverting scripture, was met and repelled by scripture rightly applied.

8. *An exceeding high mountain.* It is not known what mountain this was. It was probably some elevated place in the vicinity of Jerusalem, on the top of which could be seen no small part of the land of Palestine. The Abbé Mariti speaks of a mountain on which he was, which answers to the description here. "This part of the mountain," says he, "overlooks the mountains of Arabia, the country of Gilead, the country of the Amorites, the plains of Moab, the plains of Jericho, the river Jordan, and the whole extent of the Dead Sea." So Moses, before he died, went up into mount Nebo, and from it God showed him "all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, and the city of palm trees, unto Zoar." Deut. xxxiv. 1—3. This shows that there were mountains from which no small part of the land of Canaan could be seen ; and we must not suppose that there was any miracle when it was shown to the Saviour. ¶ *All the kingdoms of the world.* It is not probable that anything more here is intended than the kingdoms of Palestine, or the land of Canaan, and those in the immediate vicinity. Judea was divided into three parts, and those parts were called kingdoms ; and the sons of Herod, who presided over them, were called

Canaan. See Rom. iv. 13, means the land of Judah ; also 1, and the Note on that place. *lory of them.* The riches, splendours, cities, mountains, &c. of this land.

*these things, &c.* All these. All these dominions Satan a right to bestow on whom he and with considerable justice. re excessively wicked ; and with degree of plausibility, therefore, ed his claim to give them away. ptation had much plausibility. garded Jesus as the king of the is the Messiah, he supposed he s to take possession of all that

He was poor, and unarmed, out followers or armies. Satan to put him in possession of it at hout any difficulty, if he would dge him as the proper lord and of that country ; if he would im rather than to God. ¶ *Wor-*

See Note on Matt. ii. 2. The e seems to mean, to acknowledge ; having a right to give these ; to him ; to acknowledge his ice on him rather than God ; that to render religious homage. We urprised at his boldness. But he ; twice foiled. He supposed it object dear to the heart of the

tection of God in great danger ; in both cases plausible, and in neither a direct violation of the law of God. Here was a higher attempt, a more decided and deadly thrust at the piety of the Saviour. It was a proposition that the Son of God should worship the devil, instead of honouring and adoring Him who made heaven and earth ; that he should bow down before the prince of wickedness and give him homage. ¶ *It is written.* In Deut. vi. 13. Satan asked him to worship him. This was expressly forbidden. And Jesus therefore drove him from his presence.

11. *The devil leaveth him.* The devil left him for a time ; Luke iv. 13. He intended to return again to the temptation, and if possible to seduce him yet from God. ¶ *The angels came and ministered.* See Matt. i. 20. They came and supplied his wants, and comforted him. From the whole of this we may learn,

1. That no one is so holy as to be free from temptation ; for the pure Son of God was sorely tempted by the devil.

2. That when God permits a temptation or trial to come upon us, he will, if we look to him, give us grace to resist and overcome it. 1 Cor. x. 13.

3. We see the art of the tempter. His temptations are adapted to times and cir-

12 ¶ Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast<sup>1</sup> into prison, he departed into Galilee;

13 And leaving<sup>2</sup> Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum,

<sup>1</sup> Or, delivered up. <sup>2</sup> Luke iv. 30, 31.

fore, artfully, plausibly, and the real purpose does not appear till he has prepared the mind for it. This is the way with all temptation. No wicked man would at once tempt another to be profane, to be drunk, to be an infidel, or to commit adultery. The principles are first corrupted. The confidence is secured. The affections are won. And then the allurements are by little and little presented, till the victim falls. How should every one be on his guard at the very first appearance of evil, at the first suggestion that may possibly lead to evil!

4. One of the best ways of meeting temptation is by applying scripture. So our Saviour did, and they will always best succeed who best wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Eph. vi. 17.

12. *John was cast into prison.* For an account of the imprisonment of John, see Matt. xiv. 1—13. ¶ *He departed into Galilee.* See Matt. ii. 22. The reasons why Jesus went into Galilee were, probably, not that he might avoid danger, for he went directly into the dominions of Herod, and Jesus had nothing in particular to fear from Herod, as he had given him no cause of offence, but, 1. Because the attention of the people had been much excited by John's preaching, and it was more favourable for his own ministry. 2. It seemed desirable to have some one to second John in the work of reformation. 3. It was less dangerous for him to commence his labours there than near Jerusalem. Judea was under the dominion of the scribes, and Pharisees, and priests. They would naturally look with envy on any one who set up for a public teacher, and who should attract much attention there. It was important, therefore, that the work of Jesus should begin in Galilee, and become somewhat established and known before he went to Jerusalem.

13. *Leaving Nazareth.* Because his townsmen cast him out, and rejected him.

which is<sup>c</sup> upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthaim:

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet,<sup>3</sup> saying,

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvii. 24—27. John vi. 17, 24. <sup>8</sup> Isa. ix. 1, 2

See Luke iv. 14—30. ¶ *Came and dwelt in Capernaum.* This was a city on the north-west corner of the sea of Tiberias. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, but it repeatedly occurs in the gospels. Though it was once a city of renown, and the metropolis of all Galilee, the site it occupied is now uncertain. When Mr. Fisk, an American missionary, travelled in Syria in 1823, he found twenty or thirty uninhabited Arab huts, occupying what are supposed to be the ruins of the once exalted city of Capernaum.

In this place, and its neighbourhood, Jesus spent no small part of the three years of his public ministry. It is hence called his own city. Matt. ix. 1. Here he healed the nobleman's son, John iv. 37; Peter's wife's mother, Matt. viii. 14; the centurion's servant, Matt. viii. 13; and the ruler's daughter, Matt. ix. 23—25. ¶ *Upon the sea coast.* The sea of Tiberias. ¶ *In the borders of Zabulon and Nephthaim.* These were two tribes of the children of Israel which were located in this part of the land of Canaan, and constituted in the time of Christ a part of Galilee. Compare Gen. xlix. 13. Josh. xix. 10—16, 32—39. The word *borders* here means boundaries. Jesus came and dwelt in the boundaries or regions of Zabulon and Naphthali.

14—16. *That it might be fulfilled, &c.* This place is recorded in Isa. ix. 1, 2. Matthew has given the sense, but not the very words of the prophet. ¶ *By the way of the sea.* Which is near to the sea, or in the vicinity of the sea. ¶ *Beyond Jordan.* This does not mean to the east of Jordan, as the phrase sometimes denotes, but rather in the vicinity of the Jordan, or perhaps in the vicinity of the sources of the Jordan. See Deut. i. 1; iv. 49. ¶ *Galilee of the Gentiles.* Galilee was divided into upper and lower Galilee. Upper Galilee was called Galilee of the Gentiles, because it was occupied chiefly by Gentiles. It was in the neighbourhood of Tyre, Sidon, &c. The

entures, includes in the scriptures are not Jews. It means the same as, or as we should say, the heathens.

*The people which sat in darkness.*

An expression denoting great ignorance. As in darkness or night we cannot see, and know not where to go, so he is ignorant of God and their way who are said to be in darkness. The light which removes this ignorance is the light of truth. See John iii. 19; 1 Pet. ii. 8. As ignorance is connected with crime and vice, so it is sometimes used to denote sin. See Job x. 21; xvi. 16; Ps. xxiii. 4; Jer. ii. 6. These words denote that the country of the Jews was peculiarly ignorant and blind.

enlighten the ignorant; his delight to guide the wandering, and to raise up those that are in the shadow of death. In doing this, Jesus set an example for all his followers. It is their duty to seek out those who are sitting in the shadow of death, and to send the gospel to them. No small part of the world is still lying in wickedness, as wicked and wretched as was the land of Zabulon and Nephthali in the time of Jesus. The Lord Jesus is able to enlighten them also. And every Christian should conceive it a privilege, as well as a duty, to imitate his Saviour in this, and to be permitted to send to them the light of life. See Matt. xxviii. 19.

17. See Matt. iii. 2.

18. *Sea of Galilee.* This was also called the sea of Tiberias, and the lake of Genesareth, and also the sea of Chinnereth, Num. xxxiv. 11; Deut. iii. 17; Josh. xii. 3. It is about fifteen miles in length, and from six to nine in width. There is no part of Palestine, it is said, which can be compared in beauty with the environs of this lake. Many populous cities once stood on its shores, such as Tiberias, Bethsaida, Capernaum, Chorazin, Hippos, &c. The shores are described by Josephus as a perfect paradise, producing every luxury under heaven, at all seasons of the year. The river Jordan flows directly through the lake, it is said, without mingling with its waters, so that the



19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you<sup>1</sup> fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left<sup>2</sup> their nets, and followed him.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren,<sup>3</sup> James the son of Zebedee, and John his

<sup>1</sup> Luke v. 10. 1 Cor. ix. 20—22. 2 Cor. xii. 16.  
<sup>2</sup> Mark x. 28—31. <sup>3</sup> Mark i. 19, 29.

19. *Fishers of men.* Ministers or preachers of the gospel, whose business it shall be to win souls to Christ.

20. *Straightway.* Immediately, as all should do when the Lord Jesus calls them. ¶ *Left their nets.* Their nets were the means of their living, perhaps all their property. By leaving them immediately, and following him, they gave every evidence of sincerity. They showed, what we should all show, that they were willing to give up all for the sake of Jesus, and to follow him wherever he should lead them. They went forth to persecution and death, for the sake of Jesus; and to the honour of saving souls from death, and of establishing a church that shall continue to the end of time. Little did they know what awaited them, when they left their unattended nets to rot on the beach, and followed the unknown and unhonoured Jesus of Nazareth. So we know not what awaits us, when we become his followers; but we should cheerfully go, when our Saviour calls, willing to commit all into his hands—come honour or dishonour, sickness or health, riches or poverty, life or death. Be it ours to do our duty at once, and to commit the result to the great Redeemer who has called us. Compare Matt. vi. 33; viii. 21, 22. John xxi. 21, 22. ¶ *Follow him.* This is an expression denoting that they became his disciples. 1 Kin. xix. 20.

22. *Left their father.* This showed how willing they were to follow Jesus. They left their father. They showed us what we ought to do. If necessary, we should leave father, and mother, and every friend. Luke xiv. 26. If they will go with us, and be Christians, it is well; if not, yet they should not hinder us. We should be the followers of Jesus. And, while in doing it, we should treat our friends tenderly and

brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching<sup>4</sup> in their syna-

<sup>4</sup> Ch. ix. 35. Luke iv. 15, 44.

kindly, yet we ought at all hazards to obey God and do our duty to him. We may add, that many, very many children, since sabbath schools have commenced, have been the means of their parents' conversion. Many children have spoken to their parents, or read the bible to them, or other books, and prayed for them, and God has blessed them and converted them. Every child in a Sunday school ought to be a Christian; and then should strive and pray that God would convert his parents, and make them Christians too.

We see here, too, what humble instruments God makes use of to convert men. He chose fishermen to convert the world. He chooses the foolish to confound the wise. And it shows that religion is true, and is the power of God, when he makes use of such instruments to change the hearts of men, and save their souls. See Notes on 1 Cor. i. 26—28.

23. *All Galilee.* See Matt. ii. 22. ¶ *Synagogues.* Places of worship, or places where the people assembled together to worship God. The origin of synagogues is involved in much obscurity. The sacrifices of the Jews were appointed to be held in one place, at Jerusalem. But there was nothing to forbid the other services of religion to be performed at any place. Accordingly the praises of God were sung in the schools of the prophets; and those who chose were assembled by the seers on the sabbath, and the new-moons, for religious worship. 1 Sam. x. 5—11. 2 Kin. iv. 23. The people would soon see the necessity of providing convenient places for their services, to shelter them from storms and heat; and this was probably the origin of synagogues. At what time they were commenced is unknown. They are mentioned by Josephus as having existed a

gogues, and preaching the gospel<sup>1</sup> of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease<sup>2</sup> among the people.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxiv. 14. Mark. I. 14. <sup>2</sup> Ch. viii. 16, 17. Pm. ciii. 3.

considerable time before the coming of Christ; and in his time they were multiplied, not only in Judea, but wherever there were Jews. There were no less than four hundred and eighty in Jerusalem alone, before it was taken by the Romans.

The synagogues were built in elevated places, wherever ten men were found who were willing to associate for worship; and were the regular customary places of meeting. In them the law, i. e. the Old Testament, divided into suitable portions, was read, prayers were offered, and the scriptures were expounded. The law was so divided, that the five books of Moses, and portions of the prophets, could be read through each year. The scriptures, after being read, were expounded. This was done, either by the officers of the synagogues, or by any person who might be invited to it by the officiating minister. Our Saviour and the apostles were in the habit of attending at those places constantly, and of speaking to the people. Luke iv. 15—22. Acts xiii. 14, 15.

The synagogues were built in imitation of the temple, with a centre building, supported by pillars, and a court surrounding it. See Note, Matt. xxi. 12. In the centre building, or chapel, was a place prepared for the reading of the law. The law was kept in a chest, or ark, near to the pulpit. The uppermost seats, Matt. xxiii. 6, were those nearest to the pulpit. The people sat round, facing the pulpit. When the law was read, the officiating person rose; when it was expounded, he was seated. Our Saviour imitated their example, and was commonly seated in addressing the people. Matt. v. 1; xiii. 1. ¶ *Teaching.* Instructing the people, or explaining the gospel. ¶ *The gospel of the kingdom.* The good news respecting the kingdom which he was about to set up; or the good news respecting the coming of the Messiah and the nature of his kingdom. ¶ *Preaching.* See ch. iii. 1. ¶ *All manner of sickness.* All kinds of sickness.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were pos-

24. *And his fame went throughout all Syria.* It is not easy to fix the exact bounds of Syria in the time of our Saviour. It was, perhaps, the general name for the country lying between the Euphrates on the east, and the Mediterranean on the west; and between mount Taurus on the north, and Arabia on the south. Through all this region the celebrity of Jesus was spread by his power of working miracles; and, as might be expected, the sick from every quarter were brought to him, in the hope that he would give relief. ¶ *Those possessed with devils.* Much difficulty exists, and much has been written, respecting those in the New Testament said to be possessed with the devil. It has been maintained by many, that the sacred writers meant only by this expression to denote those who were melancholy or epileptic, or afflicted with some other grievous disease. This opinion has been supported by arguments too long to be repeated here. On the other hand, it has been supposed that the persons so described were under the influence of evil spirits, who had complete possession of the faculties, and who produced many symptoms of disease not unlike melancholy, and madness, and epilepsy. That such was the fact, will appear from the following considerations: 1. That Christ and the apostles spoke to them, and of them, as such; that they addressed them, and managed them, precisely as if they were so possessed, leaving their hearers to infer beyond a doubt that such was their real opinion. 2. The devils or demons spake, conversed, asked questions, gave answers, and expressed their knowledge of Christ, and their fear of him, things that certainly could not be said of diseases. Matt. viii. 29. Luke viii. 28. 3. They are represented as going out of the persons possessed, and entering the bodies of others. Matt. viii. 32. 4. Jesus spoke to them, and asked their name, and they answered him. He threatened them, commanded them to be silent, to depart, and not to return. Mark i. 25; v. 8; ix. 25. 5.

essed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those

that had the palsy; and he healed them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiv. 13, 14. Luke vi. 17—18.

Those possessed are said to know Christ; to be acquainted with the Son of God. Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34. This could not be said of diseases. 6. The early fathers of the church interpreted these passages in the same way. They derived their opinions probably from the apostles themselves, and their opinions are a fair interpretation of the apostles' sentiments. 7. If it may be denied that Christ believed in such possessions, it does not appear why any other clear sentiment of his may not in the same way be disputed. There is, perhaps, no subject on which he expressed himself more clearly, or acted more uniformly, or which he left more clearly impressed on the minds of his disciples.

Nor is there any absurdity in the opinion that those persons were really under the influence of devils. For, 1. It is no more absurd to suppose that an angel, or many angels, should have fallen and become wicked, than that so many men should. 2. It is no more absurd that Satan should have possession of the human faculties, or inflict diseases, than that men should do it, a thing which is done every day. What more frequent than for a wicked man to corrupt the morals of others, or by inducing them to become intemperate, to produce a state of body and mind quite as bad as to be possessed with the devil? 3. We still see a multitude of cases that no man can prove not to be produced by the presence of an evil spirit. Who would attempt to say that some evil being may not have much to do in the case of madmen? 4. It afforded an opportunity for Christ to show his power over the enemies of himself and of man, and thus to evince himself qualified to meet every enemy of the race, and triumphantly to redeem his people. He came to destroy the power of Satan. Acts xxvi. 18; Rom. xvi. 20. ¶ *Those which were lunatick.* This name is given to the disease from the Latin name of the moon, *Luna*. It has the same origin in Greek. It was given, because it was formerly imagined that it was affected by the increase or the decrease of the moon. The name is still retained, although it is not certain that the moon has any

effect on the disease. On this point physicians are not determined, but no harm arises from the use of the name. It is mentioned only in this place, and in Matt. xvii. 15. It was probably the falling sickness, or the epilepsy, the same as the disease mentioned Mark ix. 18—20; Luke ix. 39, 40. ¶ *And those that had the palsy.* Many infirmities were included under this general name of palsy, in the New Testament. 1. The paralytic shock, affecting the whole body. 2. The hemiplegy, affecting only one side of the body; the most frequent form of the disease. 3. The paraplegy, affecting all the system below the neck. 4. The catalepsy. This is caused by a contraction of the muscles in the whole or a part of the body, and is very dangerous. The effects are very violent and fatal. For instance, if, when a person is struck, he happens to have his hand extended, he is unable to draw it back; if not extended, he is unable to stretch it out. It appears diminished in size, and dried up in appearance. Hence it was called the withered hand. Matt. xii. 10—13. 5. The cramp. This, in eastern countries, is a fearful malady, and by no means unfrequent. It originates from chills in the night. The limbs, when seized with it, remain unmoveable, and the person afflicted with it resembles one undergoing a torture. This was probably the disease of the servant of the centurion. Matt. viii. 6; Luke vii. 2. Death follows from this disease in a few days. ¶ *And he healed them.* This was done evidently by a miraculous power. A miracle is an effect produced by divine power above, or opposed to, what are regular effects of the laws of nature. It is not a violation of the laws of nature, but is a suspension of their usual operation, for some important purpose. For instance, the regular effect of death is that the body returns to corruption. This effect is produced by the appointed laws of nature; or, in other words, God usually produces this effect. When he suspends that regular effect, and gives life to a dead body for some important purpose, it is a miracle. Such an effect is clearly the result of divine power. No other being but God can do it. When, therefore, Christ and the

## CHAPTER V.

## Near Capernaum.

re followed him great people from Galilee, polis, and from Judea, and from

### PTER V.

went, *Beatitudes*, 1—12. *Christ's disciples in the Christ's teaching con-* 7—20. *The spirituality* —32. *Swearing*, 33—

this power, it was clear od approved of their he had commissioned they were authorized to He would not give this false doctrine. Most or scases were incurable. ed them by a word, it f all proofs that he was . Miracles form one of nents for the truth of

apolis. Decapolis was egion of country in the alf tribe of Manasseh, t of Jordan. It was so ncluded ten cities, which of the Greek word De- phers generally agree was the chief of these e only one of them west that Hippo, or Hippos, Dios, Pelea, or Pella, eaa, Philadelphia, and hanae, were seven of the nd the other two were and Capitolas, or Dapo- os. These cities were by foreigners, Greeks, ur Saviour, and not by e keeping of swine by latt. viii. 30—33, which the Jewish law.

### PTER V.

*multitudes*. The great me to attend on his bstance of this discourse e vi. It is commonly a on the mount. It is that it was repeated, in erent occasions, and to At those times, parts of wa omitted, and Luke

37. *Retaliation*, 38—42. *Love of enemies*, 43—48.

AND seeing the multitudes,<sup>1</sup> he went up into a mountain : and when he was set, his disciples came unto him :

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,<sup>2</sup>

3 Blessed are the poor<sup>3</sup> in spirit :<sup>4</sup> for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xlii. 2. John vi. 2, 3. <sup>2</sup> Luke vi. 20—26. <sup>3</sup> Isa. lvi. 15 ; lxii. 2. <sup>4</sup> Jas. ii. 5.

may have recorded it as it was pronounced on one of those occasions. See Notes, Luke vi. 17—20. ¶ *Went up into a mountain*. This mountain, or hill, was somewhere in the vicinity of Capernaum, but where precisely is not mentioned. He ascended the hill, doubtless, because it was more convenient to address the multitude from an eminence, than on the same level with them. A hill or mountain is still shown a short distance to the north-west of the ancient site of Capernaum, which tradition reports to have been the place where this sermon was delivered, and which is called on the maps the mount of Beatitudes. But there is no positive evidence that this is the place where this discourse was uttered. ¶ *And when he was set*. This was the common mode of teaching among the Jews. Luke iv. 20 ; v. 3. John viii. 2. Acts xiii. 14 ; xvi. 13. ¶ *His disciples came*. The word *disciples* means learners, those who are taught. Here it is put for those who attended on the ministry of Jesus, and does not imply that they were all Christians. See John vi. 66.

3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*. The word *blessed* means happy, referring to that which produces felicity, from whatever quarter it may come. ¶ *Poor in spirit*. Luke says simply, *blessed are the poor*. It has been disputed whether Christ meant the poor in reference to the things of this life, or the humble. The gospel is said to be preached to the poor, Matt. xi. 5 ; Luke iv. 18. It was predicted that the Messiah should preach to the poor, Isa. lxi. 1. It is said that they have peculiar facilities for being saved, Matt. xix. 23 ; Luke xviii. 24. The state of such persons is therefore comparatively blessed, or happy. Riches

4 Blessed are they that mourn:  
 1 for they shall be comforted.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxi. 3. <sup>2</sup> Esek. vii. 16. <sup>3</sup> John xvi. 20.  
 2 Cor. i. 7.

produce care, anxiety, and dangers, and not the least is the danger of losing heaven by them. To be poor in spirit is to have an humble opinion of ourselves; to be sensible that we are sinners, and have no righteousness of our own; to be willing to be saved only by the rich grace and mercy of God; to be willing to be where God places us, to bear what he lays on us, to go where he bids us, and to die when he commands; to be willing to be in his hands, and to feel that we deserve no favour from him. It is opposed to pride, and vanity, and ambition. Such are happy: 1. Because there is more real enjoyment, in thinking of ourselves as we are, than in being filled with pride and vanity. 2. Because such Jesus chooses to bless, and on them he confers his favours here. 3. Because theirs will be the kingdom of heaven hereafter. It is remarkable that Jesus began his ministry in this manner, so unlike all others. Other teachers had taught that happiness was to be found in honour, or riches, or splendour, or sensual pleasure. Jesus overlooked all those things, and fixed his eye on the poor, and the humble, and said that happiness was to be found in the lowly vale of poverty more than in the pomp and splendours of life. ¶ *Their's is the kingdom of heaven.* That is, either they have peculiar facilities for entering the kingdom of heaven, and and of becoming Christians here, or they shall enter heaven hereafter. Both these ideas are probably included. A state of poverty—a state where we are despised or unhonoured by men—is a state where men are most ready to seek the comforts of religion here, or a home in the heavens hereafter.

4. *Blessed are they that mourn.* This is capable of two meanings: either that those are blessed who are afflicted with the loss of friends or possessions; or that they who mourn over sin are blessed. As Christ came to preach repentance, to induce men to mourn over their sins and to forsake them, it is probable that he had the latter particularly in view. 2 Cor. vii. 10. At the same time, it is true that the gospel only can give true comfort to

5 Blessed are the meek: for  
 they<sup>3</sup> shall inherit the earth.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 2, 11, 22, 23, 34. Isa. lx. 21.  
 Rom. iv. 13.

those in affliction, Isa. lxi. 1—3; Luke iv. 18. Other sources of consolation do not reach the deep sorrows of the soul. They may blunt the sensibilities of the mind; they may produce a sullen and reluctant submission to what we cannot help; but they do not point to the true source of comfort. In the God of mercy only, in the Saviour, in the peace that flows from the hope of a better world, and there only, is there comfort. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18; v. 1. Those that mourn thus shall be comforted. So those that grieve over sin; that are full of sorrow that they have committed it, and are afflicted and wounded that they have offended God, shall find comfort in the gospel. Through the merciful Saviour those sins may be forgiven. In him the weary and heavy-laden soul shall find peace, Matt. xi. 28—30; and the presence of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, shall sustain us here, John xiv. 26, 27; and in heaven all tears shall be wiped away, Rev. xxi. 1.

5. *The meek.* Meekness is patience in the reception of injuries. It is neither meanness, nor a surrender of our rights, nor cowardice; but it is the opposite of sudden anger, of malice, of long-harboured vengeance. Christ insisted on his right when he said, "If I have done evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" John xviii. 23. Paul asserted his right, when he said, "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily! nay verily, but let them come themselves, and fetch us out," Acts xvi. 37. And yet Christ was the very model of meekness. It was one of his characteristics, "I am meek," Matt. xi. 19. So of Paul. No man endured more, and more patiently than he. Yet he was not passionate. He bore patiently. He did not harbour malice. He did not press his rights through thick and thin, and trample down the rights of others to secure his own.

Meekness is the reception of injuries with a belief that God will vindicate us. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," Rom. xii. 19. It little becomes us to take his

6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst<sup>1</sup> after right-

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlii. 1, 2. Am. viii. 11—13.

place, and to do what he has a right to do, and what he has promised to do.

Meekness produces peace. It is proof of true greatness of soul. It comes from a heart too great to be moved by little insults. It looks upon those who offer them with pity. He that is constantly ruffled, that suffers every little insult or injury to throw him off his guard, and to raise a storm of passion within, is at the mercy of every mortal that chooses to disturb him. He is like the troubled sea that cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. ¶ *They shall inherit the earth.* This might have been translated *the land*. It is probable that here is a reference to the manner in which the Jews commonly expressed themselves to denote any great blessing. It was promised to them that they should inherit the land of Canaan. For a long time the patriarchs looked forward to this. Gen. xv. 7, 8. Exod. xxxii. 13. They regarded it as a great blessing. It was so spoken of in the journey in the wilderness; and their hopes were crowned when they took possession of the promised land. Deut. i. 38; vi. 20. In the time of our Saviour they were in the constant habit of using the Old Testament where this promise perpetually occurs, and they used it as a proverbial expression, to denote any great blessing, perhaps as the sum of all blessings. Psa. xxxvii. 11. Isa. lx. 21. Our Saviour used it in this sense; and meant to say, not that the meek should own great property, or have many lands, but that they should possess peculiar blessings. The Jews also considered the land of Canaan as a type of heaven, and of the blessings under the Messiah. To inherit the land became, therefore, an expression denoting those blessings. When our Saviour promises it here, he means that the meek shall be received into his kingdom, and partake of its blessings here, and of the glories of the heavenly Canaan hereafter. The value of meekness, even in regard to worldly property and success in life, is often exhibited in the scriptures, Prov. xv. 1; xxii. 24, 25; xxv. 8, 15. It is also seen in common life that a meek,

patient, mild man is the most prospered. An impatient and quarrelsome man raises up enemies; often loses property in lawsuits; spends his time in disputes and broils, rather than in sober, honest industry; and is harassed, vexed, and unsuccessful in all that he does. Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. iv. 8; vi. 3—6.

7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for<sup>2</sup> they shall obtain mercy.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. cxlv. 19. Isa. lxx. 13. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xli. 1, 2.

patient, mild man is the most prospered. An impatient and quarrelsome man raises up enemies; often loses property in lawsuits; spends his time in disputes and broils, rather than in sober, honest industry; and is harassed, vexed, and unsuccessful in all that he does. Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. iv. 8; vi. 3—6.

6. *Blessed are they that hunger, &c.* Hunger and thirst, here, are expressive of strong desire. Nothing would better express the strong desire which we ought to feel to obtain righteousness, than hunger and thirst. No wants are so keen, none so imperiously demand supply as these. They occur daily; and when long continued, as in case of those shipwrecked, and doomed to wander months or years over burning sands, with scarcely any drink or food, nothing is more distressing. An ardent desire for any thing is often represented in the scriptures by hunger and thirst. Psa. xlii. 1, 2; lxiii. 1, 2. A desire for the blessings of pardon and peace; a deep sense of sin, and want, and wretchedness, is also represented by thirsting. Isa. lv. 1, 2. Those that are perishing for want of righteousness, that feel that they are lost sinners, and strongly desire to be holy, shall be filled. Never was there a desire to be holy, which God was not willing to gratify. And the gospel of Christ has made provision to satisfy all who truly desire to be holy. See Psa. xvii. 15. Isa. lv. 1—3; lxx. 13. John iv. 14; vi. 35; vii. 37, 38.

7. *Blessed are the merciful.* That is, those who are so affected by the sufferings of others, as to be disposed to alleviate them. This is given as an evidence of piety, and it is said that they who show mercy to others, shall obtain it. The same sentiment is found in Matt. x. 42. Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water only unto one of these little ones in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward. See also Matt. xxv. 34—40. It should be done to glorify God; that is, in obedience to his commandments, and with a desire that he should be honoured; and feeling that we are benefiting one of

8 Blessed are the pure in heart:<sup>1</sup> for they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxiv. 3, 4. Heb. xii. 14. 1 John iii. 2, 3. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxxiv. 12-14. Acts vii. 26. Rom. xii. 18. Jas. iii. 17, 18.

his creatures. Then he will regard it as done to him, and will reward us. See the sentiment of this verse, that the merciful shall obtain mercy, more fully expressed in 2 Sam. xxii. 26, 27; and in Psa. xviii. 25, 26.

Nowhere do we imitate God more than in showing mercy. In nothing does God more delight than in the exercise of mercy. Exod. xxxiv. 6. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. 1 Tim. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9. To us, guilty sinners; to us, wretched, dying, and exposed to eternal woe, he has shown his mercy by giving his Son to die for us; by expressing his willingness to pardon and save us; and by sending his Spirit to renew and sanctify the heart. Each day of our life, each hour, and each moment, we partake of his undeserved mercy. All the blessings we enjoy are proofs of his mercy. If we, also, show mercy to the poor, the wretched, the guilty, it shows that we are like God. We have his spirit, and shall not lose our reward. And we have abundant opportunity to do it. Our world is full of guilt and woe, which we may help to relieve; and every day of our lives we have opportunity, by helping the poor and wretched, and by forgiving those who injure us, to show that we are like God. See Note on ch. vi. 14, 15.

8. *Blessed are the pure in heart.* That is, whose minds, motives, and principles are pure. Who seek not only to have the external actions correct, but who desire to be holy in heart, and who are so. Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart. *They shall see God.* There is a sense in which all shall see God. Rev. i. 7. That is, they shall behold him as a Judge, not as a Friend. In this place, it is spoken of as a peculiar favour. So also in Rev. xxii. 4. And they shall see his face. To see the face of one, and to be in his presence, were, among the Jews, phrases expressive of great favour. It was regarded as a high honour to be in the presence of kings and princes, and to be permitted to see them. Prov. xxii. 29. He shall stand

before kings, &c. See also 2 Kings xxv. 19. "Those that stood in the king's presence;" in the Hebrew, "those that saw the face of the king;" that is, who were his favourites and friends. So here, to see God, means to be his friends and favourites, and to dwell with him in his kingdom.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake:

<sup>3</sup> Luke vi. 22. <sup>4</sup> Acts v. 41. 1 Pet. iii. 13, 14.

9. *Blessed are the peace-makers.* Those who strive to prevent contention, and strife, and war. Who use their influence to reconcile opposing parties, and to prevent lawsuits, and hostilities, in families and neighbourhoods. Every man may do something of this; and no man is more like God, than he who does it. There ought not to be unlawful and officious interference in that which is none of our business; but without any danger of falling into this evil, every man has many opportunities of reconciling opposing parties. Friends, neighbours, men of influence, lawyers, physicians, may do much to promote peace. And it should be taken in hand in the beginning. "The beginning of strife," says Solomon, "is like the letting out of water." "An ounce of prevention," says the English proverb, "is worth a pound of cure." Long and most deadly quarrels might be prevented by a little kind interference in the beginning. *Children of God.* See Eph. v. 1. Those who resemble God, or who manifest a spirit like his. He is the Author of peace, 1 Cor. xiv. 33; and all those who endeavour to promote peace are like him, and are worthy to be called his children.

10. *Persecuted.* To persecute means literally to pursue, follow after, as one does a flying enemy. Here it means to vex, or oppress one, on account of his religion. They persecute others who injure their names, reputation, or property, or endanger or take their life, on account of their religious opinions. *For righteousness' sake.* Because they are righteous, or are the friends of God. We are not to seek persecution. We are not to provoke it by strange sen-

for their's is the kingdom of heaven.<sup>1</sup>

11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you<sup>2</sup> falsely, for my sake.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Thess. i. 5—7. <sup>2</sup> *Lying*; 1 Pet. iv. 14—16.

ments or conduct, or by violating the laws of civil society, or by modes of speech that are unnecessarily offensive to others. But if, in the honest effort to be Christians, and to live the life of Christians, others persecute and revile us, we are to consider this as a blessing. It is an evidence that we are the children of God, and that he will defend us. 1 Pet. iv. 2—14, 19. All that live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution. 2 Tim. iii. 2. ¶ *Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* They have evidence that they are Christians, and shall be brought to heaven.

11. *Revile you.* Reproach you; call you by evil and contemptuous names; revile you because you are Christians. Thus they said of Jesus, that he was a Samaritan and had a devil; that he was mad; and thus they reviled and mocked him on the cross. But being reviled he reviled not again, 1 Pet. ii. 23; and thus being reviled, we should bless, 1 Cor. iv. 2; and thus, though the contempt of the world is not in itself desirable, yet it is blessed to tread in the footsteps of Jesus, to imitate his example, and even suffer for his sake; Phil. i. 29. ¶ *All manner of evil—falsely.* An emphasis should be laid on the word *falsely* in this passage. It is not blessed to have evil spoken of us if we deserve it; but if we deserve it not, then we should not consider it as a calamity. We should take patiently, and show how much the Christian, under the consciousness of innocence, can bear. 1 Pet. iii. 14—17. ¶ *For my sake.* Because you are attached to me; because you are Christians. We are not to seek such things. We are not to do things to offend others; to treat them harshly or unkindly, and court sellings. We are not to say or do things, though they may be on the subject of religion, designed to disgust or offend. But if, in the faithful endeavour to be Christians, we are reviled, as our Master was, then we are to take it with patience,

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward<sup>3</sup> in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 ¶ Ye are the salt<sup>4</sup> of the earth: but if the salt have lost his

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 17. <sup>4</sup> Lev. ii. 13. Mark ix. 50. Col. iv. 6.

and to remember that thousands before us have been treated in like manner. When thus reviled or persecuted, we are to be meek, patient, humble; not angry; not reviling again; but endeavouring to do good to our persecutors and slanderers. 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. In this way, many have been convinced of the power and excellence of that religion which they were persecuting and reviling. They have seen that nothing else but Christianity could impart such patience and meekness to the persecuted; and have, by this means, been constrained to submit themselves to the gospel of Jesus. Long since, it became a proverb, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.

12. *Rejoice, &c.* The reward of such suffering is great. To those who suffer most, God imparts the highest rewards. Hence the crown of martyrdom has been thought to be the brightest that any of the redeemed shall wear; and hence many of the early Christians sought to become martyrs, and threw themselves in the way of their persecutors, that they might be put to death. They literally rejoiced, and leaped for joy, at the prospect of death for the sake of Jesus. Though God does not require us to seek persecution, yet all this shows that there is something in religion to sustain the soul, which the world does not possess. Nothing but the consciousness of innocence, and the presence of God, could have borne them up in the midst of these trials; and the flame, therefore, kindled to consume the martyr, has also been a bright light, showing the truth and power of the gospel of Jesus. ¶ *The prophets, &c.* The holy men who came to predict future events, and who were the religious teachers of the Jews. For an account of their persecutions, see Heb. xi. 25—27, 33—38.

13. *Ye are the salt of the earth.* Salt renders food pleasant and palatable, and preserves from it putrefaction. So Chris-



savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light<sup>1</sup> of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii. 19, 20. Phil. ii. 15. 1 Thess. v. 5.

tians, by their lives and instructions, are to keep the world from entire moral corruption. By bringing down, by their prayers, the blessing of God, and by their influence and example, they save the world from universal vice and crime. ¶ *Salt have lost its savour.* That is, if it has become insipid, tasteless, or have lost its preserving properties. The salt used in this country is a chemical compound, muriate of soda, and if the saltiness were lost, or it were to lose its savour, there would be nothing remaining. It enters into the very nature of the substance. In eastern countries, however, the salt used was impure, mingled with vegetable and earthy substances; so that it might lose the whole of its saltiness, and a considerable quantity of earthy matter remain. This was good for nothing except that it was used, as it is said, to place in paths, or walks, as we use gravel. This kind of salt is common still in that country. It is found in the earth in veins or layers, and when exposed to the sun and rain, it loses its saltiness entirely. Maundrell says, "I broke a piece of it, of which that part that was exposed to the ruin, sun, and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, yet it had perfectly lost its savour. The inner part, which was connected with the rock, retained its savour, as I found by proof."

14. *The light of the world.* The light of the world often denotes the sun. John xi. 9. The sun renders objects visible, shows their form, their nature, their beauties, and deformities. The term light is often applied to religious teachers. See Isa. xlix. 6. Matt. iv. 16. Luke ii. 32. John i. 4; viii. 12. It is pre-eminently applied to Jesus in these places, because he is, in the moral world, what the sun is in the natural world. The apostles, and Christian ministers, and all Christians, are lights of the world, because they, by their in-

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under <sup>a</sup> a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before

<sup>1</sup> The word in the original, signifieth a measure containing about a pint less than a peck.

structions and examples, show what God requires, what is the condition of man, what is the way of duty, peace, and happiness, the way that leads to heaven. ¶ *A city that is set on an hill, &c.* Many of the cities of Judea were placed on the summits or sides of mountains, and could be seen from afar. This was the case with Jerusalem; and it is said by Maundrell, that near the place where our Saviour is supposed to have delivered his sermon, there is still such a town, called Saphat, anciently Bethesda. This can be seen far and near. Perhaps Jesus pointed to such a city, and told his disciples that they were like it. They were seen from far. Their actions could not be hid. The eyes of the world were upon them. They must be seen; and as this was the case, they ought to be holy, harmless, and undefiled.

15. *Neither do men light a candle, &c.* Jesus proceeded here to show them that the very reason why they were enlightened was, that others might also see the light, and be benefited by it. When men light a candle, they do not conceal the light, but place it where it may be of use. So it is with religion. It is given that we may benefit others. It is not to be concealed, but suffered to show itself, and to shed light on a surrounding wicked world. ¶ *A bushel.* Greek, a measure containing nearly a peck. It denotes any thing, here, that might conceal the light.

16. *Let your light so shine, &c.* Let your holy life, your pure conversation, and your faithful instruction, be everywhere seen and known. Always, in all societies, in all business, at home and abroad, in prosperity and adversity, let it be seen that you are real Christians. ¶ *That they may see your good works.* This is not the motive to influence us, simply that we may be seen, comp. ch. vi. 1; but that our heavenly Father may be glorified. It is not right to do a thing

en, that they may see your good works, and glorify<sup>1</sup> your Father which is in heaven.

17 ¶ Think not that I am come

<sup>1</sup> Pet. ii. 12.

rely to be seen by others, for this is pride and ostentation; but we are to do that, being seen, God may be honoured. The Pharisees acted to be seen of men; the Christians act to glorify God, and care little what men may think of them, except as by their conduct others may be taught to honour God. ¶ *Glorify your Father.* Praise, or honour God, or be to worship him. Seeing in your lives the excellency of religion, the power and efficacy of the gospel, they may be won to Christians also, and give praise and glory to God for his mercy to a lost world.

We learn here, 1. That religion, if it is not concealed. 2. That where it is not manifest in the life, it does not exist. 3. That professors of religion, to live like other men, give evidence that they have never been renewed. 4. That to attempt to conceal or hide our Christian knowledge or experience is to betray our trust, and injure the cause of Christ, and render our lives useless. And

That good actions will be seen, and I lead men to honour God. If we have no other way of doing good—if we are poor, and unlearned, and unknown—we may do good by our lives. No sincere and humble Christian lives in vain. The feeblest light at midnight is of use.

How far this little candle throws his beams:  
So shines a good deed in a naughty world!"

17. *Think not that I am come, &c.* Our Saviour was just entering on his work. It was important for him to state what he came to do. By his setting up to be a teacher in opposition to the Scribes and Pharisees, some might charge him with an intention to destroy their law, and abolish the customs of the nation. He, therefore, told them that he did not come to that end, but really to fulfil or accomplish what was in the law and the prophets. "To destroy. To abrogate; to deny their divine authority; to set men free from the obligation to obey them.

*The law.* The five books of Moses, which called the law. See Note on Luke xxiv.

to destroy<sup>2</sup> the law, or the<sup>3</sup> prophets: I am not come to destroy but to<sup>4</sup> fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you,

<sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 15. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xlii. 21. <sup>4</sup> Psal. xl. 6, 8.

44. ¶ *The prophets.* The books which the prophets wrote. These two divisions here seem to comprehend the Old Testament, and Jesus says that he came not to do away or destroy the authority of the Old Testament. ¶ *But to fulfil.* To complete the design; to fill up what was predicted; to accomplish what was intended in them. The word *fulfil*, also, means sometimes to teach or inculcate, Col. i. 25. The law of Moses contained many sacrifices and rites which were designed to shadow forth the Messiah, Heb. ix. These were fulfilled when he came and offered himself a sacrifice to God—

"A sacrifice of nobler name,  
And richer blood than they."

The prophets contained many predictions respecting his coming and death. These were all to be fulfilled and fully accomplished by his life and his sufferings.

18. *Verily.* Truly, certainly. A word of strong affirmation. ¶ *Till heaven and earth pass.* This expression denotes that the law never should be destroyed till it should be all fulfilled. It is the same as saying, every thing else may change, the very earth and heaven may pass away, but the law of God shall not be destroyed till its whole design shall be accomplished. ¶ *One jot.* The word *jot*, or *yod*—<sup>1</sup> is the name of the Hebrew letter I, the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. ¶ *One tittle.* The Hebrew letters were written with small points or apices as in the letter Schin—<sup>2</sup> or Sin—<sup>3</sup>—which serve to distinguish one letter from another. To change a small point of one letter, therefore, might vary the meaning of a word, and destroy the sense. Hence the Jews were exceedingly cautious in writing these letters, and considered the smallest change or omission a reason for destroying the whole manuscript when they were transcribing the Old Testament. The expression, *one jot or one tittle*, became proverbial, and means that the smallest part of the law should not be destroyed.

The laws of the Jews are commonly

Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle<sup>1</sup> shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvi. 17.

divided into moral, ceremonial, and judicial. The moral laws are such as grow out of the nature of things, which cannot, therefore, be changed—such as the duty of loving God and his creatures. These cannot be abolished, as it can never be made right to hate God, or to hate our fellow men. Of this kind are the ten commandments; and these our Saviour has neither abolished nor superseded. The ceremonial laws are such as are appointed to meet certain states of society, or to regulate the religious rites and ceremonies of a people. These can be changed when circumstances are changed, and yet the moral law be untouched. A general may command his soldiers to appear sometimes in a red coat, and sometimes in blue, or in yellow. This would be a ceremonial law, and might be changed as he pleased. The duty of obeying him, and of being faithful to his country, could not be changed. This is a moral law. A parent might suffer his children to have fifty different dresses at different times, and love them equally in all. The dress is a mere matter of ceremony, and may be changed. The child, in all these garments, is bound to love and obey his father. This is a moral law, and cannot be changed. So the laws of the Jews. Those to regulate mere matters of ceremony, and rites of worship, might be changed. Those requiring love and obedience to God, and love to men, could not be changed, and Christ did not attempt it. Matt. xix. 16—19; xxii. 37—39. Luke x. 27. Rom. xiii. 9.

A third species of law was the judicial, or those regulating courts of justice, contained in the Old Testament. These were of the nature of the ceremonial law, and might also be changed at pleasure. The judicial law regulated the courts of justice of the Jews. It was adapted to their own civil society. When the form of the Jewish polity was changed, this was of course no longer binding. The ceremonial law was fulfilled by the coming of Christ; this shadow was lost in the substance, and ceased to be binding. The moral law was confirmed and unchanged.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the

19. *Shall break.* Shall violate, or disobey. ¶ *These least commandments.* The Pharisees, it is probable, divided the precepts of the law into lesser and greater, teaching that they who violated the former were guilty of a trivial offence only. See Matt. xxiii. 23. Christ teaches that in his kingdom they who make this distinction, or who taught that any laws of God might be violated with impunity, should be called least; while they should be held in high regard who observed all the laws of God without distinction. ¶ *Shall be called least.* That is, shall be least. See ver. 9. The meaning of this passage seems to be this: in the kingdom of heaven, i. e. in the kingdom of the Messiah, or in the church which he is about to establish, see Note, Matt. iii. 2, he that breaks the least of these commandments shall be in no esteem, or shall not be regarded as a proper religious teacher. The Pharisees divided the law into greater and lesser precepts. They made no small part of it void by their traditions and divisions. Matt. xxiii. 23; xv. 3—6. Jesus says that in his kingdom all this vain division and tradition should cease. Such divisions and distinctions should be a small matter. He that attempted them should be the least of all. Men would be engaged in yielding obedience to all the law of God, without any such vain distinctions. ¶ *Shall be called great.* He that teaches that all the law of God is binding, and that all of it should be obeyed, without attempting to specify what is most important, shall be a teacher worthy of his office, shall teach the truth, and shall be called great. We learn hence, 1. That all the law of God is binding on Christians. Compare Jas. ii. 10. 2. That all the commands of God should be preached in their proper place, by Christian ministers. 3. That they who pretend that there are any laws of God so small that they need not obey them, are unworthy of his kingdom. And 4. That true piety has respect to all the commandments of God, and keeps them. Psa. cxix. 6.

kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great<sup>1</sup> in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed<sup>2</sup> *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xxiii. 23—28. Phil. iii. 9.

20. *Your righteousness.* Your holiness, your views of the nature of righteousness, and your conduct and lives. Unless you are more holy than they are, you cannot be saved. ¶ *Shall exceed.* Shall excel, or abound more. This righteousness was external, and was not real holiness. The righteousness of true Christians is seated in the heart, and is therefore genuine. Jesus means, that unless they had more real holiness of character than the Scribes, they could not be saved. ¶ *The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.* See Notes on ch. iii. 7. Their righteousness consisted in outward observances of the ceremonial and traditional law. They offered sacrifices, fasted often, prayed much, were very punctilious about abutions and tithes and the ceremonies of religion, but neglected justice, truth, purity, holiness of heart, and did not strive to be pure in their motives before God. See Matt. xxiii. 13—33. The righteousness that Jesus required in his kingdom was purity, chastity, honesty, temperance, the fear of God, and the love of man. It is pure, internal, reaching the motives, and making the life holy. ¶ *The kingdom of heaven.* See ch. iii. 2. Shall not be a fit subject of his kingdom here, or saved in the world to come.

21. *Ye have heard.* Or, this is the common interpretation among the Jews. Jesus proceeds here to comment on some prevailing opinions among the Jews; to show that the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was defective; and that men needed a better righteousness, or they could not be saved. He shows what he meant by that better righteousness, by showing that the common opinions of the Scribes were erroneous. ¶ *By them of old time.* This might be translated, to the ancients, referring to Moses and the prophets. But it is more probable that Christ

no case enter into the kingdom or heaven.

21 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said<sup>3</sup> by them of old time,<sup>4</sup> Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That

<sup>3</sup> Or, to them. <sup>4</sup> Exod. xx. 13. Deut. v. 17.

here refers to the interpreters of the law and the prophets. Jesus did not set himself against the law of Moses, but against the false and pernicious interpretations of the law prevalent in his time. ¶ *Thou shalt not kill.* See Exod. xx. 13. This literally denotes taking the life of another, with malice, or with intention to murder him. The Jews understood it as meaning no more. The comment of our Saviour shows that it was spiritual, and was designed to extend to the thoughts and feelings, as well as the external act. ¶ *Shall be in danger of.* Shall be held guilty, and be punished by. The law of Moses declared that the murderer should be put to death. Lev. xxiv. 21. Num. xxxv. 16. It did not say, however, by whom this should be done, and it was left to the Jews to organize courts to have cognizance of such crimes. Deut. xvi. 18. ¶ *The judgment.* This was the tribunal that had cognizance of cases of murder, &c. It was a court that sat in each city or town, and consisted commonly of seven members. It was the lowest court among the Jews, and from it an appeal might be taken to the Sanhedrim.

22. *But I say unto you.* Jesus being God as well as man, John i. 1, and, therefore, being the original giver of the law, had a right to expound it, or extend its application as he pleased. Compare Matt. xii. 6, 8. He therefore spoke here and elsewhere as having authority and not as the Scribes. It may be added here, that no mere man ever spake as Jesus did, when explaining or enforcing the law. He did it as having a right to do it; and he that has a right to ordain and change laws in the government of God must be himself divine. ¶ *Is angry—without a cause.* Anger, or that feeling which we have when we are injured, and which prompts us to defend ourselves when in

whosoever is <sup>1</sup> angry with his brother without a cause <sup>2</sup> shall be in

danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, <sup>3</sup> *Raca*,

<sup>1</sup> Ob. ver. 10, 12. Rom. xii. 10. <sup>2</sup> 1 John iii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. *vain fellow*. 2 Sam. vi. 20.

danger, is a natural feeling, given to us : 1. As a natural expression of our disapprobation of a course of evil conduct ; and, 2. That we may defend ourselves when suddenly attacked. When excited against sin, it is lawful. God is angry with the wicked. Jesus looked on the hypocritical Pharisees with anger. Mark iii. 5. So it is said, "Be ye angry, and sin not." Eph. iv. 26. This anger, or indignation against sin, is not what our Saviour speaks of here. That is anger without a cause ; that is, unjustly, rashly, hastily, where no offence had been given or intended. In that case it is evil ; and it is a violation of the sixth commandment, because "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." 1 John iii. 15. He has a feeling which would lead him to commit murder, if it were fully acted out. ¶ *His brother*. By a brother here seems to be meant a neighbour, or perhaps any one with whom we may be associated. As all men are descended from one father, and are all the creatures of the same God, so they are all brethren ; and so every man should be regarded and treated as a brother. Acts xvii. 26. ¶ *Raca*. This is a Syriac word, expressive of great contempt. It comes from a verb signifying to be empty, vain ; and hence, as a word of contempt, it denotes senseless, stupid, shallow-brained. Jesus teaches here that to use such words is a violation of the sixth commandment. It is a violation of the spirit of that commandment, and, if indulged, may lead to a more open and dreadful infraction of that law. Children should learn that to use such words is highly offensive to God, for we must give an account of every idle word which we speak in the day of judgment. ¶ *In danger of the council*. The word translated council, is in the original sanhedrim, and there can be no doubt that Jesus refers to the Jewish tribunal of that name. This was instituted in the time of the Maccabees, probably about two hundred years before Christ. It was composed of seventy-two judges ; the high priest was the president of this tribunal. The seventy-two members were made up of the chief priests and elders of the people,

and the Scribes. The chief priests were such as had discharged the office of the high-priest, and those who were the heads of the twenty-four classes of priests, who were called in an honorary way high or chief priests. See Matt. ii. 4. The elders were the princes of the tribes, or heads of the family associations. It is not to be supposed that all the elders had a right to a seat here, but such only as were elected to the office. The scribes were learned men of the nation, elected to this tribunal, being neither of the rank of priests or elders. This tribunal had cognizance of the great affairs of the nation. Till the time when Judea was subjected to the Romans, it had the power of life and death. It still retained the power of passing sentence, though the Roman magistrate held the right of execution. It usually sat in Jerusalem, in a room near the temple. It was before this tribunal that our Saviour was tried. It was then assembled in the palace of the high priest. Matt. xxvi. 3, 57. John xviii. 24. ¶ *Thou fool*. This term expressed more than want of wisdom. It was expressive of the highest guilt. It had been commonly used to denote those who were idolaters, Deut. xxii. 21 ; and also one who is guilty of great crimes. Josh. vii. 15. Ps. xiv. 1. ¶ *Hell fire*. The original of this is "*the gehennah of fire*." The word gehenna, commonly translated hell, is made up of two Hebrew words, and signifies the valley of Hinnom. This was formerly a pleasant valley, near to Jerusalem on the south. A small brook or torrent usually ran through this valley, and partly encompassed the city. This valley the idolatrous Israelites devoted formerly to the horrid worship of Moloch. 2 Kin. xvi. 3. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3. In describing that worship, the ancient Jewish writers inform us, that the idol of Moloch was of brass, adorned with a royal crown, having the head of a calf, and his arms extended, as if to embrace any one. When they offered children to him, they heated the statue within by a great fire, and when it was burning hot, they put the miserable child into his arms, where it was soon consumed by the heat ; and, in order that

shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.<sup>1</sup>

23 Therefore if thou bring thy

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 28.

he cries of the child might not be heard, they made a great noise with drums and other instruments about the idol. These drums were called Toph; and hence a common name of the place was Tophet. Jer. vii. 31, 32.

After the return of the Jews from captivity, this place was held in such abhorrence, that, by the example of Josiah, 2 Kin. xxiii. 10, it was made the place for all the dead carcasses and filth of the city; and was not unfrequently the place of executions. It became, therefore, extremely offensive; the sight was terrific; the air was polluted and pestilential; and to preserve it in any manner pure, it was necessary to keep fires continually burning there. The extreme loathsomeness of the place, the filth and putrefaction, the corruption of the atmosphere, and the fires blazing by day and by night, made it one of the most appalling and terrific objects with which a Jew was acquainted. It was called the *gehenna of fire*; and was the image which our Saviour often employed to denote the future punishment of the wicked.

In this verse it denotes a degree of suffering higher than the punishment inflicted by the court of seven, or the sanhedrim, and the whole verse may therefore mean: he that hates his brother without a cause is guilty of a violation of the sixth commandment, and shall be punished with a severity similar to that inflicted by the court of judgment. He that shall suffer his passions to transport him to still greater extravagances, and shall make him an object of derision and contempt, shall be exposed to still severer punishment, corresponding to that which the sanhedrim, or council, inflicts. But he who shall load his brother with odious appellations and abusive language, shall incur the severest degree of punishment, represented by being burnt alive in the horrid and awful valley of Hinnom.

The amount, then, of this difficult and important verse is this. The Jews considered but one crime a violation of the sixth commandment, viz. actual murder, or

gift<sup>2</sup> to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee:

24 Leave there thy gift before

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xvi. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Isa. i. 10, 17.

taking away life wilfully, unlawfully. Jesus says that the commandment is much broader. It relates not only to the external act, but to the feelings and words. He specifies three forms of such violation. 1. Unjust anger. 2. Anger accompanied with an expression of contempt. 3. Anger, with an expression not only of contempt, but wickedness. Among the Jews there were three degrees of condemnation: that by the judgment, the council, and the fire of Hinnom. Jesus says likewise there shall be grades of condemnation for the different ways of violating the sixth commandment. Not only murder shall be punished by God; but anger, and contempt, shall be regarded by him as a violation of the law, and punished according to the offence. As these offences were not actually cognizable before the Jewish tribunals, he must mean that they will be punished hereafter. And all these expressions relate to degrees of punishment proportionate to crime in the future world, the world of judgment and of woe.

23, 24. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, &c. The Pharisees were intent only on the external act in worship. They looked not at all to the internal acts of the mind. If a man conformed to the external rites of religion, however much envy, and malice, and secret hatred he might have, they thought he was doing well. Our Saviour taught a different doctrine. It was of more consequence to have the heart right, than to perform the outward act. If, therefore, says he, a man has gone so far as to bring his gift to the very altar, and should remember that any one had any thing against him, it was his duty there to leave his offering, and go and be reconciled. While a difference of this nature existed, his offering could not be acceptable. He was not to wait till the offended brother should come to him; he was to go and seek him out, and be reconciled. So now, the worship of God will not be acceptable, however well performed externally, until we are at peace with those that we have injured. "To obey is better than sacrifice." He that

the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother,<sup>1</sup> and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxv. 9. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Jas. iii. 13—18.

comes to worship his Maker filled with malice, and hatred, and envy, and at war with his brethren, is a hypocritical worshipper, and will incur God's displeasure. God is not deceived; and he will not be mocked. ¶ *Thy gift.* Thy sacrifice. What thou art about to devote to God as an offering. ¶ *To the altar.* The altar was situated in front of the temple, and was the place on which sacrifices were made. See Note on Matt. xxi. 12. To bring a gift to the altar, was expressive of worshipping God, for this was the way in which he was formerly worshipped. ¶ *Thy brother.* Any man, especially any fellow worshipper. Any one of the same religious society. ¶ *He hath ought.* Is offended, or thinks he has been injured by you in any manner. ¶ *First be reconciled.* This means, settle the difficulty; make proper acknowledgment, or satisfaction, for the injury. If you have wronged him, make restitution. If you owe him a debt which ought to be paid, pay it. If you have injured his character, confess it, and seek pardon. If he is under an erroneous impression; if your conduct has been such as to lead him to suspect that you have injured him, make an explanation. Do all in your power, and all you ought to do, to have the matter settled. From this we learn: 1. That in order to worship God acceptably, we must do justice to our fellow men. 2. Our worship will not be acceptable, unless we do all we can to live peaceably with others. 3. It is our duty to seek reconciliation with others when we have injured them. 4. This should be done before we attempt to worship God. 5. This is often the reason why God does not accept our offerings, and we go empty away from our devotions. We do not do what we ought to others; we cherish improper feelings, or refuse to make proper acknowledgments, and God will not accept such attempts to worship him.

25, 26. Agree with thine adversary quickly. This is still an illustration of the

with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee<sup>2</sup> to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee,<sup>3</sup> Thou

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxv. 8. Luke xii. 58, 59. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xviii. 24.

sixth commandment. To be in hostility, to go to law, to be litigious, is a violation always, on one side or the other, of the law requiring us to love our neighbour; and our Saviour regards it as a violation of the sixth commandment. While you are in the way with him, says he, that is, while you are going to the court, before the trial has taken place, it is your duty, if possible, to come to an agreement. It is wrong to carry the contention to a court of law. See 1 Cor. vi. 6, 7. The consequence of not being reconciled, he expresses in the language of courts. The adversary shall deliver to the judge, and he to the executioner, and he shall throw you into prison. He did not mean to say, that this would be literally the way with God; but that his dealings with those that harboured these feelings, and would not be reconciled with their brethren, were represented by the punishment inflicted by human tribunals. That is, he would hold all such as violators of the sixth commandment, and would punish them accordingly.

There is no propriety in the use sometimes made of this verse, in regarding God as the adversary of the sinner, and urging him to be reconciled to God while in the way to judgment. Nor does the phrase, "thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing," refer to the eternity of future punishment. It is language taken from courts of justice, to illustrate the truth that God will punish men according to justice, for not being reconciled. That punishment will be eternal indeed, but this passage does not prove it. ¶ *Thine adversary.* A man that is opposed to us in law. It here means a creditor; a man who has a just claim on us. ¶ *In the way with him.* While you are going before the court. Before the trial comes on. ¶ *The officer.* The executioner; or as we should say, the sheriff. ¶ *The uttermost farthing.* The last farthing. All that is due. The farthing was a small coin used in Judea,

shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery :

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh <sup>1</sup> on a woman to lust after her hath committed

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxi. 1. Prov. vi. 25.

equal to two mites. It was equal to about three halfpence of our money.

27, 28. *Ye have heard—thou shalt not commit adultery.* Our Saviour in these verses explains the seventh commandment. It is probable that the Pharisees had explained this commandment as they had the sixth, as extending only to the external act; and that they regarded evil thoughts and a wanton imagination as of little consequence, or as not forbidden by the law. Our Saviour assures them that the commandment did not regard the external act merely, but the secrets of the heart, and the movements of the eye. That they who indulged a wanton desire; that they who looked on a woman to increase their lust, have already, in the sight of God, violated the commandment, and committed adultery in the heart. Such was the guilt of David, whose deep and awful crime fully shows the danger of indulging in evil desires, and in the ravings of a wanton eye. See 2 Sam. xi. Psa. li. See also 2 Pet. ii. 14. So exceedingly strict and broad is the law of God! And so heinous in his sight are thoughts and feelings, which may be for ever concealed from the world!

29. *Thy right eye.* The Hebrews, like others, were accustomed to represent the affections of the mind by the members or parts of the body. Rom. vii. 23; vi. 13. Thus the bowels denoted compassion; the heart, affection or feeling; the reins, understanding, secret purpose. An evil eye denotes sometimes envy, Matt. xx. 15: sometimes an evil passion, or sin in general. Mark vii. 21, 22: "Out of the heart proceedeth an evil eye." In this place, as in 2 Pet. ii. 14, it is used to denote strong adulterous passion, unlawful desire, and inclination. The right eye and hand are mentioned, because *they are of most use to us, and denote that, however strong the*

adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye <sup>2</sup> offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: <sup>3</sup> for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.<sup>4</sup>

30 And if thy right hand offend

<sup>2</sup> Or, do cause thee to offend. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 27. <sup>4</sup> Rom. viii. 13. 1 Cor. ix. 27.

passion may be, or difficult to part with, yet that we should do it. ¶ *Shall offend thee.* The noun from which the verb *offend*, in the original, is derived, commonly means a stumbling-block, or a stone placed in the way, over which one might fall. It also means a net, or a certain part of a net against which, if a bird strikes, it springs the net, and is taken. It comes to signify, therefore, any thing by which we fall, or are ensnared; and applied to morals, means any thing by which we fall into sin, or by which we are ensnared. The English word *offend* means now, commonly, to displease; to make angry; to affront. This is by no means the sense of the word in scripture. It means to cause to fall, or to allure into sin. The eye does this, when it wantonly looks on a woman to lust after her. ¶ *Pluck it out, &c.* It cannot be supposed that Christ intended this to be taken literally. His design was to teach that the dearest objects, if they caused us to sin, were to be abandoned; that by all sacrifices and self-denials, we must overcome the evil propensities of our nature, and resist our wanton imaginations. Some of the fathers, however, took this commandment literally. Our Saviour several times repeated this sentiment. See Matt. xviii. 9. Mark ix. 43—47. See also Col. iii. 5. ¶ *It is profitable for thee.* It is better for thee. You will be a gainer by it. ¶ *One of thy members perish.* It is better to deny yourself the gratification of an evil passion here, however much it may cost you, than to go down to hell for ever. ¶ *Thy whole body be cast into hell.* Thy body with all its unsubdued and vicious propensities. This will constitute no small part of the misery of hell. The sinner will be sent there as he is, with every evil desire; every unsubdued propensity; every wicked and troublesome



thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce<sup>ment</sup>:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxiv. 1. Jer. lli. 1. Mark x. 2—9.

passion; and yet with no possibility of gratification. It constitutes our highest notions of misery, when we think of a man filled with anger, pride, malice, avarice, envy, and lust, and no opportunity of gratifying them for ever. This is all that is necessary to make an eternal hell.

31, 32. *It hath been said, &c.* That is, by Moses. Deut. xxiv. 1, 2. The husband was directed, if he put his wife away, to give her a bill of divorce, that is, a certificate of the fact, that she had been his wife, and that he had dissolved the marriage. There was considerable difference of opinion among the Jews for what causes the husband was permitted to do this. One of their famous schools maintained that it might be done for any cause, however trivial. The other, that adultery only could justify it. The truth was, however, that the husband exercised this right at pleasure; that he was judge in the case, and dismissed his wife when, and for what cause, he chose. And this seems to be agreeable to the law in Deuteronomy. Our Saviour, in Mark x. 2—12, says that this was permitted "on account of the hardness of their hearts; but in the beginning it was not so." God made a single pair, and ordained marriage for life. But Moses found the people so much hardened, so long accustomed to the practice, and so rebellious, that, as a matter of civil appointment, he thought it best not to attempt any change. Our Saviour brought marriage back to its original institution, and declared that whosoever put away his wife henceforward should be guilty of adultery. But one offence, he declared, could justify divorce. This is now the law of God. This was the original institution. This is the only law that is productive of peace and good morals, and the due respect of a wife, and

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife,<sup>2</sup> saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy-

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xix. 9. 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

the good of children. Nor has any man, or set of men, a right to interfere, and declare that divorces may be granted for any other cause. Whosoever, therefore, are divorced for any cause except the single one of adultery, if they marry again, are, according to the scriptures, living in adultery. No earthly laws can trample down the laws of God, or make that right which he has solemnly pronounced wrong.

33. *Thou shalt not forswear thyself.* Christ here proceeds to correct another false interpretation of the law. The law respecting oaths is found in Lev. xix. 12. By those laws, men were forbidden to perjure themselves, or to forswear, that is, swear falsely. ¶ *Perform unto the Lord.* Perform literally, really, and religiously, what is promised in an oath. ¶ *Thine oaths.* An oath is a solemn affirmation, or declaration, made with an appeal to God for the truth of what is affirmed, and imprecating his vengeance, and renouncing his favour, if what is affirmed is false. A false oath is called perjury; or, as in this place, forswearing.

It appears, however, from this passage, as well as from the ancient writings of the Jewish rabbins, that while they professedly adhered to the law, they had introduced a number of oaths in common conversation, and oaths which they by no means considered as binding. For example, they would swear by the temple, by the head, by heaven, by the earth. So long as they kept from swearing by the name of Jehovah, and so long as they observed the oaths publicly taken, they seemed to consider all others as allowable, and allowedly broken. This is the abuse which Christ wished to correct. It was the practice of swearing in common conversation, and especially swearing by created things. To do this, he said that

## CHAPTER V.

## Near Capernaum.

shalt perform unto the oaths :

I say unto you, Swear neither by heaven ; for throne :

by the earth ; for it is called : neither by Jerusalem :

12. Num. xxx. 2. Deut. xxiii. 23. —32. Jas. v. 12.

staken in their views of the such oaths. They were connected with God ; and to Him, was a species of trifling. Heaven is his throne ; the footstool ; Jerusalem his peculiar head was made by him, such under his control, that to make one hair white or swear by these things, therefore, treat irreverently objects of God ; and could not be

our here evidently had no religious oaths, or oaths taken in justice. It was merely the wicked habit of swearing in passion ; of swearing on every day by every thing, that he

This he does condemn in a justified manner. He himself, not refuse to take an oath in law. Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. So called God to witness his sin ; is all that is meant by an Rom. i. 9 ; ix. 1. Gal. i. 20.

Oaths were, moreover, profane law of Moses, and Christ came to repeal those laws. Deut. 10.

swear not at all. That is, in which he proceeds to speak not in any of the common ways customary at that time. *neither by heaven ; for it is God's throne.* To it was, if it meant anything, to do that sitteth thereon. Matt.

*The earth—it is his footstool.* By that, therefore, is really God. Or, perhaps it means : 1. no right to pledge, or swear belongs to God ; and 2. That inanimate objects are unmeaning

If they are real oaths, they are of no value. Being, who has power to do. A footstool is that on which feet rest when sitting. The

lem ; for it is<sup>3</sup> the city of the great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea ; Nay, nay : for what-

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi. 2, 10.

term is applied to the earth, to denote how lowly and humble an object it is when compared with God. ¶ *Jerusalem.* Ch. ii. 1. ¶ *City of the great King.* That is of God ; called the great King, because he was the King of the Israelites, and Jerusalem was the capital of the nation, and the place where he was peculiarly honoured as King.

36. *Thy head.* This was a common oath. The Gentiles also, many of them, used this oath. To swear by the head was the same as to swear by the life ; or to say, I will forfeit my life if what I say is not true. God is the author of the life, and to swear by that, therefore, is the same as to swear by him. ¶ *One hair, &c.* You have no control or right over your own life. You cannot even change one single hair. God has all that control ; and it is therefore improper and profane to pledge what is God's gift and God's property ; and it is the same as swearing by God himself.

37. *Your communication.* Your word ; what you say. ¶ *Be, yea.* Yes. This does not mean that we should always use the word yea, for it might as well have been translated yes. But it means that we should simply affirm, or declare that a thing is so. ¶ *More than these.* More than these affirmations. Profane oaths come of evil. ¶ *Cometh of evil.* Is evil. Proceeds from some evil disposition or purpose. And from this we may learn : 1. That profane swearing is always the evidence of a depraved heart. To trifle with the name of God, or with any of his works, is itself most decided proof of depravity. 2. That no man is believed any sooner in common conversation because he swears to a thing. When we hear a man swear to a thing, it is pretty good evidence that he knows what he is saying to be false, and we should be on our guard. He that will break the third commandment, will not hesitate to break

soever is more than these cometh of evil.<sup>1</sup>

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An<sup>e</sup> eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth :

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 25. Col. iii. 9. Jas. v. 12. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xxi. 24.

the ninth also. And this explains the fact that profane swearers are seldom believed. The man who is always believed, is he whose character is beyond suspicion in all things; who obeys all the laws of God; and whose simple declaration therefore is enough. A man that is truly a Christian, and leads a christian life, does not need oaths and profaneness to make him believed. 3. It is no mark of a gentleman to swear. The most worthless and vile; the refuse of mankind; the drunkard and the prostitute, swear as well as the best dressed and educated gentleman. No particular endowments are requisite to give a finish to the art of cursing. The basest and meanest of mankind swear with as much tact and skill as the most refined; and he that wishes to degrade himself to the very lowest level of pollution and shame, should learn to be a common swearer. Any man has talents enough to learn to curse God, and his fellow men, and to pray—for every man who swears, prays—that God would sink him and others into hell. No profane man knows but that God will hear his prayer, and send him to the regions of woe. 4. Profaneness does no man any good. No man is the richer, or wiser, or happier for it. It helps no one's education, or manners. It commends no one to any society. The profane man must be, of course, shut out from female society; and no refined intercourse can consist with it. It is disgusting to the refined; abominable to the good, insulting to those with whom we associate; degrading to the mind; unprofitable, needless, and injurious in society; and awful in the sight of God. 5. God will not hold the profane swearer guiltless. Wantonly to profane his name, to call his vengeance down, to curse him on his throne, to invoke damnation, is perhaps of all offences the most awful. And there is not in the universe more cause of amazement at his forbearance, than that God does not rise *in vengeance, and smite the profane*

39 But I say unto you,<sup>3</sup> that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee<sup>4</sup> on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee

<sup>3</sup> Prov. xx. 22; xxiv. 29. <sup>4</sup> Isa. l. 6.

swearer at once to hell. Verily in a world like this, where his name is profaned every day, and hour, and moment, by thousands, God shows that he is slow to anger; and that his mercy is without bounds.

38—41. *An eye for an eye, &c.* This command is found in Exod. xxi. 24. Lev. xxiv. 20. Deut. xix. 21. In these places it was given as a rule to regulate the decisions of judges. They were to take eye for eye, and tooth for tooth, and to inflict burning for burning. As a judicial rule, it is not unjust. Christ finds no fault with the rule as applied to magistrates, and does not repeal it. But, instead of confining it to magistrates, the Jews had extended it to private conduct, and made it the rule by which to take revenge. They considered themselves justified by this rule to inflict the same injury on others that they had received. Against this our Saviour remonstrates. He declares that the law had no reference to private revenge; that it was given only to regulate the magistrate; and that their private conduct was to be regulated by different principles.

The general principle which he laid down was, that we are not to resist evil; that is, as it is in the Greek, not to set ourselves against an evil person who is injuring us. But even this general direction is not to be pressed too strictly. Christ did not intend to teach that we are to see our families murdered, or be murdered ourselves, rather than to make resistance. The law of nature, and all laws, human and divine, have justified self-defence, when life is in danger. It cannot surely be the intention to teach that a father should sit by coolly, and see his family butchered by savages, and not be allowed to defend them. Neither natural nor revealed religion ever did, or ever can teach this doctrine. Our Saviour immediately explains what he means by it. Had he intended to refer it to a case where life is in danger, he would most surely have mentioned it. Such a case

at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xii. 17—21. 1 Cor. vi. 7.

as far more worthy of statement than one which he did mention. A doctrine so unusual, so unlike all that the world had believed, and that the best men had acted on, deserved to be formally noted. Instead of doing this, however, he confines himself to smaller matters, to things of comparatively trivial interest, and says, that in these we had better take care than to enter into strife and law-suits. The first case is where we are beaten on the cheek. Rather than contend and fight, we should take it patiently and turn the other cheek. This does not, however, prevent our remonstrating firmly, and mildly, on the injustice of the thing, and insisting that justice should be done, as is evident from the example of the Saviour himself. See John xviii. 23. The second evil mentioned is where a man litigious, and determined to take all the advantage the law can give him; following us with vexatious and expensive law-suits. Our Saviour directs us, rather than to imitate him—rather than to contend with a revengeful spirit in courts of justice, and to perpetual broils—to take a trifling jury, and yield to him. This is merely a question about property, and not about science and life.

*Coat.* The Jews wore two principal garments, an interior and an exterior. The interior, here called the *coat*, or tunic, was made commonly of linen, and encircled the whole body, extending down to the knees. Sometimes beneath this garment, as in the case of the priests, there was another garment corresponding to pantaloons. The coat, or tunic, was extended to the neck, and had long or short sleeves. Over this was commonly worn an upper garment, here called *cloak*, or mantle. It was made commonly nearly square, of different sizes, five or six cubits long, and many broad, and wrapped round the body, and thrown off when labour was performed. This was the garment which is said to have been without seam, woven throughout. John xix. 23. If, said Christ, an adversary wished to obtain, at law, one of these garments, rather than contend with him, let him have the other also. A reference to various articles of apparel occurs frequently in the *New Testament*,

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.<sup>1</sup>

42 Give to him that asketh

and it is desirable to have a correct view of the ancient mode of dress, in order to a correct understanding of the Bible. The Asiatic modes of dress are nearly the same from age to age, and hence it is not difficult to illustrate the passages where such a reference occurs. The ordinary dress consisted of the inner garment, the outer garment, the girdle, and the sandals. In regard to the sandals, see note on ch. iii. 11. In the girdle was the place of the purse, Matt. x. 9; and to it the sword and dirk were commonly attached. Compare 2 Sam. xx. 8. In modern times, the pistols are also fastened to the girdle. It is the common place for the handkerchief, smoking materials, inkhorn, and in general the implements of one's profession. The girdle served to confine the loose flowing robe, or outer garment, to the body. It held the garment when it was tucked up, as it was usually in walking, or in labour. Thence to gird up the loins, became a significant figurative expression, denoting readiness for service, activity, labour, and watchfulness; and to loose the loins, denoted the giving way to repose and indolence. 2 Kin. iv. 29. Job xxxviii. 3. Isa. v. 27. Luke xii. 35. John xxi. 7.

41. *Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile.* The word translated *shall compel* is of Persian origin. Post-offices were then unknown. In order that the royal commands might be delivered with safety and despatch in different parts of the empire, Cyrus stationed horsemen at proper intervals on all the great public highways. One of those delivered the message to another, and intelligence was thus rapidly and safely communicated. These heralds were permitted to compel any person, or to press any horse, boat, ship, or other vehicle that they might need, for the quick transmission of the king's commands. It was to this custom that our Saviour refers. Rather, says he, than resist a public authority, requiring your attendance and aid for a certain distance, go peaceably twice the distance. ¶ *A mile.* A Roman mile was a thousand paces. ¶ *Twain.* Two.

42. *Give to him that asketh thee.* This is the general rule. It is better to give

thee.<sup>1</sup> and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou<sup>2</sup> away.

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said,<sup>3</sup> Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxi. 16—22. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xv. 7—11. <sup>3</sup> Deut. xxi. 6.

sometimes to an undeserving person, than to turn away one really necessitous. It is good to be in the habit of giving. At the same time, the rule must be interpreted so as to be consistent with our duty to our families, 1 Tim. v. 8, and with other objects of justice and charity. It is seldom, perhaps never, good to give to a man that is able to work. 2 Thess. iii. 10. To give to such is to encourage laziness, and to support the idle at the expense of the industrious. If such a man is indeed hungry, feed him; if he wants anything farther, give him employment. If a widow, an orphan, a man of misfortune, or a man infirm, lame, or sick, is at your door, never send them away empty. See Matt. xxv. 35—45. Heb. xiii. 2. So of a poor and needy friend that wishes to borrow. We are not to turn away, or deny him. This deserves, however, some limitation. It must be done in consistency with other duties. To lend to every worthless man, would be to throw away our property, encourage laziness and crime, and ruin our families. It should be done consistently, and of this every man is to be the judge. Perhaps our Saviour meant to teach that where there was a deserving friend or brother in want, we should lend to him, without usury, and without standing much about the security.

43. *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* The command to love our neighbour was a law of God. Lev. xix. 18. That we must, therefore, hate our enemy, was an inference drawn from it, by the Jews. They supposed that if we loved the one, we must, of course, hate the other. They were total strangers to that great, peculiar law of religion which requires us to love both. A neighbour is literally one that lives near to us; then, one that is near to us by acts of kindness and friendship. This is its meaning here. See also Luke x. 36.

44. *But I say unto you, Love<sup>4</sup>* There are two

44 But I say unto you, Love<sup>4</sup> your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray<sup>5</sup> for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

<sup>4</sup> Rom. xii. 14, 20. <sup>5</sup> Luke xxiii. 34. Acts vii. 60.

kinds of love, involving the same general feeling, or springing from the same fountain of good-will to all mankind, but differing still so far as to admit of separation in idea. The one is that feeling by which we approve of the conduct of another, commonly called the love of complacency; the other, by which we wish well to the person of another, though we cannot approve his conduct. This is the love of benevolence; and this love we are to bear towards our enemies. It is impossible to love the conduct of a man that curses and reviles us, and injures our person or property, or that violates all the laws of God; but though we may hate his conduct, and feel deeply that we are affected by it, yet we may still wish well to the person; we may pity his madness and folly; we may speak kindly of him, and to him; we may not return evil for evil; we may aid him in the time of trial; and seek to do him good here, and to promote his eternal welfare hereafter. Rom. xii. 17—20. This seems to be what is meant by loving our enemies; and this is a peculiar law of Christianity; and the highest possible test of piety, and probably the most difficult of all duties to be performed. ¶ *Bless them that curse you.* The word *bless* here means to speak well of or to. Not to curse again, or to slander, but to speak of those things which we can commend in an enemy; or if there is nothing that we can commend, to say nothing about him. The word *bless*, spoken of God, means to regard with favour, or to confer benefits, as when God is said to bless his people. When we speak of our blessing God, it means to praise him, or give thanks to him. When we speak of blessing men, it unites the two meanings, and signifies to confer favour, to thank, or to speak well of. ¶ *Despitefully use you.* The word thus translated, means, first, to injure by prosecution in law; then, wantonly and unjustly to accuse, and to injure in any way. This seems to be its meaning here. ¶ *Persecute.* See ch. v. 10.

45 That ye may be the <sup>1</sup>children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise <sup>2</sup>on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?

<sup>1</sup> John xiii. 35. <sup>1</sup> John iii. 9, 10. <sup>2</sup> Job xxv. 2. Psa. cxlv. 2. Acts xiv. 17.

45. *That ye may be the children of your Father.* In Greek, *the sons of your Father.* The word son has a variety of significations. See Note on Matt. i. 1. Christians were called the sons or children of God in several of these senses: as his offspring; as adopted; as his disciples; as imitators of him. In this passage, the word is used because, in doing good to enemies, they resemble God. He makes his sun to rise on the evil and good, and sends rain, without distinction, on the just and unjust. So his people should show that they imitate or resemble him, or possess his spirit, by doing good in a similar way.

46. *What reward have ye?* The word *reward* seems to be used in the sense of deserving of praise, or reward. If you only love those that love you, you are selfish, you are not disinterested; it is not genuine love for the character, but love for the benefit; and you deserve no commendation. The very Publicans would do the same. ¶ *The Publicans.* The publicans were tax-gatherers. Judea was a province of the Roman empire. The Jews bore this foreign yoke with great impatience, and paid their taxes with great reluctance. It happened, therefore, that those who were appointed to collect taxes were objects of great detestation. They were, besides, men who would be supposed to execute their office at all hazards; men who were willing to engage in an odious and hated employment; men often of abandoned characters, oppressive in their exactions, and dissolute in their lives. By the Jews they were associated in character with thieves, and adulterers, with the profane, and dissolute. Christ says that even these wretched men would love their benefactors.

47. *And if ye salute your brethren, &c.* The word *salute* here means to show

do not even the publicans <sup>3</sup> the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, <sup>4</sup> even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. ix. 10—13; xxi. 31, 32. <sup>4</sup> Gen. xvii. 1. Deut. xviii. 13. Luke vi. 36, 40. Col. i. 28.

the customary tokens of civility, or to treat with the common marks of friendship. See Note, Luke x. 4. Christ says that the worst men, the very publicans, would do this. Christians should do more; they should show that they had a different spirit; they should treat their enemies as well as wicked men did their friends. This should be done: 1. Because it is right; it is the only really amiable spirit; and, 2. We should show that religion is not selfish, and is superior to all other principles of action.

48. *Be ye therefore perfect.* Jesus concludes this part of the discourse by commanding his disciples to be perfect. This word commonly means finished, complete, pure, holy. Originally it is applied to a piece of mechanism, as a machine that is complete in its parts. Applied to men, it refers to completeness of parts, or perfection, where no part is defective or wanting. Thus, Job, ch. i. 1, is said to be perfect; that is, not holy as God, or sinless—for fault is afterwards found with him. Job ix. 20; xlii. 6. But his piety was proportionate, had a completeness of parts, was consistent and regular. He exhibited his religion as a prince, a father, an individual, a benefactor of the poor. He was not merely a pious man in one place, but uniformly. He was consistent everywhere. This is the meaning in Matthew: Be not religious merely in loving your friends and neighbours, but let your piety be shown in loving your enemies; be perfect; imitate God; let the piety be complete, and proportionate, and regular. This every Christian may be; this every Christian must be.

#### REMARKS ON CHAPTER V.

I. The gospel pronounces blessings on things far different from what the world has thought to be sources of happiness.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Against ostentation in alms, 1—4. In devotion, 5—13, 16—18. Forgiveness of injuries, 14, 15. Treasure in heaven, 19—21. Singleness of aim, 22, 24. Against worldly anxiety, 25—34.*

Men suppose that happiness is to be found in mirth, in wealth, in honour, in esteem, in freedom from persecution. Christ says that it is to be sought in the reverse. Often men are most happy in poverty, in sickness, in persecution, when supported by the presence and promises of a merciful God. And if God appoints our station there, we should submit to it, and learn therewith to be content.

II. We may see the evil of anger. It is a species of murder. If it be secretly cherished, or exhibited by contempt and injury, it must bring down the displeasure of God. It is a source of misery. True enjoyment is found in meekness, peace, calmness, and benevolence. In such a firmness, and steadiness, and dependence on God, as to keep the soul unruffled in the midst of provocation, is happiness. Such was Christ.

III. We see the evil of indelicacy of feeling and sentiment, and the extreme strictness and severity of the law respecting the intercourse of the sexes, ver. 28. And yet what law is more frequently violated? By obscene anecdotes and tales; by songs and jibes; by double meanings and innuendoes; by looks and gestures; by conversation, and obscene books and pictures, this law of our Saviour is perpetually violated. If there is any one sentiment of most value for the comfort, the character, the virtuous sociability, of the young—one that will shed the greatest charm over society, and make it the most pure—it is that which inculcates perfect delicacy and purity in the intercourse of the sexes. Virtue of any kind never blooms when this is not cherished. Modesty and purity once gone, every flower that would diffuse its fragrance over life, withers and dies with it. There is no one sin that so withers and blights every virtue; none that so enfeebles and prostrates every ennobling feeling of the soul, as to indulge in a life of impurity. How should purity dwell in the heart; breathe from the lips; kindle in the eye; live in the imagination; and

**T**AKE heed that ye do not your <sup>1</sup> alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward <sup>2</sup> of your Father which is in heaven.

<sup>1</sup> Or, righteousness. Psa. cxli. 2. <sup>2</sup> Or, with.

dwell in the intercourse of all the young! An eternal, avenging God is near to every wanton thought; marks every eye that kindles with impure desire; rolls the thunder of justice over every polluted soul; and is preparing woe for every violator of the laws of purity and chastity. Prov. ii. 18, 19; v. 3—14; vii. 22, 23.

IV. Revenge is equally forbidden. Persecution, slander, wilful prosecution, anger, personal abuse, duelling, suicide, murder, are all violations of the law of God, and all must call down his vengeance.

V. We are bound to love our enemies. This is a law of christianity, original and peculiar. No system but this has required it, and no act of christian piety is more difficult. None shows more the power of the grace of God; none is more ornamental to the character; none more like God; and none furnishes better evidence of piety. He that can meet a man kindly who is seeking his hurt; who can speak well of one that is perpetually slandering and cursing him; that can pray for a man that abuses, injures, and wounds him; and that can seek heaven for him that wishes his damnation; is in the way to life. This is religion, beautiful as its native skies; pure like its Source; kind like its Author; fresh like the dew of the morning; clear and diffusive like the beams of the rising sun; and holy like the feelings and words that come from the bosom of the Son of God. He that can do this need not doubt that he is a Christian. He has caught the very spirit of the Saviour, and he must inherit eternal life.

## CHAPTER VI.

1. *Alms.* Liberality to the poor and needy. Any thing given to them to supply their wants. Our Saviour, here, does not positively command his disciples to aid the poor, but supposes that they would do it of course, and gives them direction how to do it. It is the nature of religion to help those who are really poor and needy, and a real Christian does not wait to be commanded to do it, but only asks

2 Therefore when thou doest *thine* alms,<sup>1</sup> do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms,<sup>2</sup> let

<sup>1</sup> Or, cause a trumpet to be sounded. <sup>2</sup> Ch. viii. 4; ix. 21. John vii. 4.

the opportunity. See Luke xix. 8; Gal. ii. 10; Jas. i. 27. ¶ *Before men, &c.* Our Lord does not forbid us to give alms before men always, but only forbids our doing it to be seen of them, for the purposes of ostentation, and to seek their praise. To a person who is disposed to do good from a right motive, it matters little whether it be in public or in private. The only thing that renders it even desirable that our deeds should be seen is, that God may be glorified. See ch. v. 16. ¶ *Otherwise.* If your only motive for doing it is to be seen of men, God will not reward you. Take heed not to do it to be seen, otherwise God will not reward you.

2. *Do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do.* The word *hypocrite* is taken from stage-players who act the part of others, or speak not their own sentiments, but the sentiments of others. It means here, and in the New Testament generally, those who dissemble or hide their real sentiments, and assume or express other feelings than their own; those who, for purposes of ostentation, or gain, or applause, put on the appearance of religion. It is probable that such persons, when they were about to bestow alms, caused a trumpet to be sounded, professedly to call the poor together to receive it, but really to call the people to attend to it; or perhaps it may mean that they should not make a great noise about it, like sounding a trumpet. ¶ *In the synagogues.* The word *synagogue* commonly means the place of assembling for religious worship known by that name. Note, Matt. iv. 23. It might mean, however, any collection of people for any purpose. And it is not improbable that it has that meaning here. It does not appear that they made a noise in bestowing charity in

not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That *thine* alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward<sup>3</sup> thee openly.

5 ¶ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in

<sup>3</sup> Luke viii. 17; xiv. 14.

the synagogues, or that it was commonly bestowed there; but it was probably done on occasion of any great assemblage, in any place of concourse, and at the corners of the streets, where it could be seen by many. ¶ *They have their reward.* That is, they obtain the applause they seek, the reputation of being charitable; and as this applause was all they wished, there is of course no further reward to be looked for or obtained.

3, 4. *Let not thy left hand know, &c.* This is a proverbial expression, signifying that the action should be done as secretly as possible. The Hebrews often attribute actions to members which properly belong to persons. The encouragement for doing this is, that it will be pleasing to God; that he will see the act, however secret it may be, and will openly reward it. If the reward is not greater in this life, it will be in the life to come. In multitudes of cases, however, alms given to the poor are lent to the Lord, Prov. xix. 17, and will be repaid in this life. Rarely, perhaps never, has it been found that the man who is liberal to the poor, has ever suffered by it in his worldly circumstances.

5. *And when thou prayest, &c.* Hypocrites manifested the same spirit about prayer as alms-giving; it was done in public places. The word *synagogues*, here, clearly means, not the place of worship of that name, but places where many were accustomed to assemble, near the markets, or courts, where they could be seen of many. Our Lord evidently could not mean to condemn prayers in the synagogues. It might be said that he condemned ostentatious prayer there, while they neglected secret prayer: but this does not appear to be his design. The Jews were much in the habit of



*Simplicity in prayer.*

MATTHEW.

A.D. 31.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth<sup>1</sup> what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our <sup>2</sup> Father<sup>3</sup> which art

<sup>1</sup> Luke xii. 30. John xvi. 23—27. <sup>2</sup> Luke xi. 2—4. <sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 15.

he intended to condemn the practice of long prayers. His own supplications were remarkably short.

9—13. This passage contains the Lord's prayer, a composition unequalled for comprehensiveness and beauty. It is supposed that some of these petitions were taken from those in common use among the Jews. Indeed, some of them, are still to be found in Jewish writings, but they did not exist in this beautiful combination. This prayer is given as a model. It is designed to express the manner in which we are to pray, evidently not the precise words or petitions which we are to use. The substance of the prayer is recorded by Luke, ch. xi. 2—4. It, however, varies from the form given in Matthew, showing that Christ intended not to prescribe this as a form of prayer to be used always, but to express the substance of our petitions, to specify to his disciples what petitions it would be proper to present to God. That he did not intend to prescribe this as a form to be invariably used, is farther evident from the fact, that there is no proof that either he or his disciples ever used exactly this form of prayer, but clear evidence that they prayed often in other language. See Matt. xxvi. 39—42, 44. Luke xxii. 42; John xvii. Acts i. 24.

9. *Our Father.* God is called a Father, 1. As he is the Creator and the great Parent of all; 2. The Preserver of the human family, and the Provider for their wants, ch. v. 45, vi. 32; 3. In a peculiar sense the Father of those who are adopted into his family, who put confidence in him, who are true followers of Christ, and made heirs of life. Rom. viii. 14—17. ¶ *Hallowed be thy name.* The word *hallowed* means to render or pronounce holy. God's name is essentially holy; and the meaning of this petition is, Let thy name be celebrated, and venerated, and esteemed as holy, everywhere, and

in <sup>4</sup> heaven, Hallowed be <sup>5</sup> thy name.

10 Thy kingdom<sup>6</sup> come. Thy will be done in earth,<sup>7</sup> as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our <sup>8</sup> daily bread.

<sup>4</sup> Psa. cxv. 3. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxi. 9; cxix. 28. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xvi. 28. Rev. xi. 15. <sup>7</sup> Psa. ciii. 22, 21. <sup>8</sup> Prov. xxx. 8. Isa. xxxiii. 16.

receive of all men proper honours. It is thus the expression of a wish or desire, on the part of the worshipper, that the name of God, or God himself, should be held everywhere in proper veneration.

10. *Thy kingdom come.* The word *kingdom* here means reign. Note, Matt. iii. 2. The petition is the expression of a wish that God may reign every where; that his laws may be obeyed; and especially that the gospel of Christ may be advanced in every land, till the world shall be filled with his glory. ¶ *Thy will be done.* The will of God is, that men should obey his law, and be holy. The word *will*, here, has reference to his law, and to what would be acceptable to him; that is, righteousness. To pray, then, that his will may be done on earth as in heaven, is to pray that his law, his revealed will, may be obeyed and loved. His law is perfectly obeyed in heaven, and his true children most ardently desire and pray that it may also be done on the earth.

The object of these three first petitions is, that God's name should be glorified, and his kingdom established; and by being placed first, we learn that his glory and kingdom are of more consequence than our wants, and that these should be first in our hearts and petitions before a throne of grace.\*

11. *Give us this day, &c.* The word

\* The following clauses respecting this prayer are found in the writings of the Jews, and were doubtless familiar in the time of Christ: "That prayer," says the Rabbins, "in which there is no mention made of the kingdom of heaven, is not a prayer." "What," say they, "is a short prayer?" Ans. Do thy will in heaven, and give rest to the spirits fearing thee below." *Give us this day, &c.* The Jews had a prayer like this: "The necessities of thy people are many, and their knowledge small; so that they do not know how to make known their wants: let it be thy good pleasure to give to each one what is necessary for his sustenance," &c. *Deliver us from evil.* The Jews prayed, "Be it thy good pleasure to free us from an evil man, and an evil

## CHAPTER VI.

## *Near Capernaum.*

forgive us our debts,<sup>1</sup>  
we our debtors.

<sup>1</sup> 21—25. Luke vii. 40—48.

denotes, doubtless, every  
ry to sustain life. Deut.  
iv. 4. This petition implies  
ce on God for the supply of  
is we are dependent on him  
such as another, it was evi-  
tention of our Saviour that  
be offered every day. This  
expressed in the plural num-

It is evidently, therefore,  
used by more than one, or  
nunity of people. No com-  
gregation can meet every  
ip but families. It is there-  
that this prayer is a strong  
and for daily family prayer.  
re else be used so as fully  
the meaning of the original  
d nowhere else can it be  
with so much propriety and  
m the lips of a father, the  
st of his household, and the  
God for those rich blessings  
ntal bosom desires on his  
ing.

*forgive us our debts*, &c. The  
here used figuratively. It  
literally that we are debtors  
hat our sins have a resem-  
s. Debtors are those who  
others for some claim in  
ransactions; for something  
ve had, and for which they  
pay according to contract.  
e can be no such transaction  
and us. It must be used  
We have not met the claims  
have violated its obligations.  
ed to its penalty. We are  
God only can forgive, in the  
none but a creditor can for-  
r. *Debts*, here, therefore,  
r offences against God—  
non: but God can forgive.  
by which we may expect  
that which we use in refer-  
s. See Psa. xviii. 25, 26.

affections, from an evil compa-  
bour, from Satan," &c. The  
own were generally closed with a  
ription of praise, not unlike this  
ayer. The people, at the close  
generally responded, "Amen!"

13 And lead us not into <sup>2</sup> tempta-  
tion, but deliver us <sup>3</sup> from evil:

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xxvi. 41. Luke xxii. 40, 46. <sup>3</sup> John xvii. 15

Matt. xviii. 23—35. Mark xi. 25. Luke  
ix. 4. This is the invariable rule by which  
God dispenses pardon. He that comes  
before him unwilling to forgive, harbour-  
ing dark and revengeful thoughts, how  
can he expect that God will show him  
that mercy which he is unwilling to show  
to others! It is not, however, required  
that we should forgive debts in a pecuniary  
sense. To them we have a right, though  
they should not be pushed with an over-  
bearing and oppressive spirit; not so as to  
sacrifice the feelings of mercy, in order to  
secure the claims of right. No man has  
a right to oppress; and when a debt can-  
not be paid, or when it would greatly  
distress a wife and children, a widow and  
an orphan; or when calamity has put it  
out of the power of an honest man to pay  
the debt, the spirit of Christianity requires  
that it should be forgiven. To such cases  
this petition in the Lord's prayer doubt-  
less extends. But it was probably intended  
to refer principally to injuries of character  
or person, which we have received from  
others. If we cannot from the heart for-  
give them, we have the assurance that  
God will never forgive us.

13. *And lead us not into temptation.*  
A petition similar to this is offered by  
David, Psa. cxli. 4: "Incline not my  
heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked  
works, with the workers of iniquity."  
God tempts no man. See Jas. i. 13.  
This phrase, then, must be used in the  
sense of permitting. Do not suffer us, or  
permit us, to be tempted to sin. In this  
it is implied that God has such control  
over us and the tempter, as to save us  
from it if we call upon him. The word  
*temptation*, however, see Note, ch. iv. 1,  
means sometimes trial, affliction, any thing  
that tests our virtue. If this be the  
meaning here, as it may be, then the  
import of the prayer is, Do not afflict or  
try us. ¶ *Deliver us from evil.* The  
original, in this place, has the article,  
deliver us from *the* evil, that is, as has  
been supposed, the evil one, or Satan.  
He is elsewhere called, by way of emi-  
nence, the evil one. Matt. xiii. 19. 1 John  
ii. 13, 14: iii. 12. Deliver us from *him*

For thine<sup>1</sup> is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

11 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you :

<sup>1</sup> Rev. v. 12, 13.

power, his snares, his arts, his temptations. He is supposed to be the great parent of evil, and to be delivered from him is to be safe. Or it may mean, deliver us from the various evils and trials which beset us, the heavy and oppressive calamities into which we are continually liable to fall. ¶ *Thine is the kingdom.* That is, thine is the reign or dominion. Thou hast control over all these things, and canst so order them as to answer these petitions. ¶ *Thine is the power.* Thou hast power to accomplish what we ask. We are weak, and cannot do it; but thou art almighty, and all things are possible with thee. ¶ *Thine is the glory.* That is, thine is the honour or praise. Not our honour, but thy glory, thy goodness, will be displayed in providing for our wants; thy power in defending us; thy praise in causing thy kingdom to spread through the earth.

This doxology, or ascription of praise, is connected with the prayer by the word *for*, to signify that all these things—the reign, power, and glory of God—will be manifested by granting these petitions. It is not because we are to be benefited, but that God's name and perfections may be manifested. His glory is, then, the first and principal thing which we are to seek when we approach him. We are to suffer our concerns to be sunk and lost sight of in the superior glory and honour of his name and dominion. We are to seek temporal and eternal life, chiefly because the honour of our Maker will be promoted, and his name be more illustriously displayed to his creatures. He is to be first, last, supreme, best, in our view; and all selfish and worldly views are to be absorbed in that one great desire of the soul that God may be all in all. Approaching him with these feelings, our prayers will be answered, our devotions will rise like incense, and the lifting up our hands will be like the evening sacrifice.

15 But<sup>2</sup> if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.<sup>3</sup>

16 ¶ Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 21—35. <sup>3</sup> Eph. iv. 31, 32. Jas. ii. 15.

*Amen.* This is a word of Hebrew origin, from a verb signifying to be firm, secure, to be true and faithful. It is a word expressing consent or strong approbation, a word of strong asseveration. It means verily, certainly, so be it. It is probable that this word was used by the people in the synagogue to signify their assent to the prayer that was uttered by the minister. And to some extent, it was probably so used in the christian church. See 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

It may be proper to remark that this doxology, *For thine is the kingdom, &c.*, is wanting in many manuscripts, and that its authenticity is doubtful.

14. *If ye forgive.* If ye pardon. ¶ *Trespasses.* Offences, faults. If ye forgive others when they offend or injure you. This is constantly required in the Bible. Our Saviour says we should forgive even if the offence be committed seventy times seven times. Matt. xviii. 22. By this is meant that when a man asks forgiveness, we are cordially and for ever to pardon the offence; we are to declare our willingness to forgive him. If he does not ask forgiveness, yet we are still to treat him kindly; not to harbour malice; not to speak ill of him; to be ready to do him good; and be always prepared to declare him forgiven when he asks it.

16. *Moreover, when thou fastest, &c.* The word *fast* literally signifies to abstain from food and drink, whether from necessity or as a religious observance. It is, however, commonly applied in the Bible, to the latter. It is, then, an expression of grief or sorrow. Such is the constitution of the body, that in a time of grief and sorrow we are not disposed to eat, or we have no appetite. The grief of the soul is so absorbing as to destroy the natural appetites of the body. Men in deep affliction eat little, and often pine away and fall into sickness, because the body refuses, on account of the deep

faces, that they may appear unto men <sup>1</sup> to fast. Verily I say unto you. They have their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lviii. 3, 5.

sorrow of the mind, to discharge the functions of health. Fasting, then, is the natural expression of grief. It is not arbitrary; it is what every person in sorrow naturally does. This is the foundation of its being applied to religion as a sacred rite. It is because the soul, when oppressed and burdened by a sense of sin, is so filled with grief, that the body refuses food. It is, therefore, appropriated always to scenes of penitence, of godly sorrow, of suffering, and to those facts connected with religion that are fitted to produce grief, as the prevalence of iniquity or some dark impending calamity, or storm, or tempest, pestilence, plague, or famine. It is also used to humble us, to bring us to reflection, to direct the thoughts away from the comforts of this world to the bliss of a better. It is not acceptable except it be the real expression of sorrow, the natural effect of feeling that we are burdened with crime.

The Jews fasted often. They had four annual fasts: 1. In commemoration of the capture of Jerusalem, Jer. lii. 6—16. 2. Of the burning of the temple, Zech. vi. 3. 3. In memory of the death of Gedaliah, Jer. xli. 4. And, 4. In memory of the commencement of the attack on Jerusalem, Zech. viii. 19. In addition to these, they had a multitude of occasional fasts. It was customary also, for the Pharisees to fast twice a week. Luke xviii. 12. ¶ *Of a sad countenance.* That is, sour, morose, assumed expressions of unfelt sorrow. ¶ *They disfigure their faces.* That is, they do not anoint and wash themselves as usual; they are uncombed, filthy, squalid, and haggard. It is said that they were often in the habit of throwing ashes on their heads and faces; and this mixing with their tears, would still farther disfigure their faces. So much pains will men take, and so much suffering will they undergo, and so much that is ridiculous will they assume, to impose on God and men. But they deceive neither. God sees through

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19 ¶ Lay not up for your-

the flimsy veil. Human eyes can pierce a disguise so thin. Hypocrites overact their part. Not having the genuine principles of piety at heart, they know not its proper expression, and hence appear supremely contemptible and abominable. Never should men exhibit outwardly more than they feel; and never should they attempt to exhibit anything for the mere sake of ostentation.

17. *But thou, when thou fastest, anoint, &c.* That is, appear as you do daily. Do not assume any new appearance, or change your visage or dress. The Jews and all neighbouring nations were much in the habit of washing and anointing their bodies. This washing was performed at every meal; and where it could be effected, the head, and sometimes other parts of the body, were daily anointed with sweet or olive oil. In a warm climate, exposed to the great heat of the sun, this practice conducted much to health, preserved the skin smooth and tender, and afforded a most grateful sensation and odour. See Mark vi. 13; vii. 2, 3. John xii. 3. Jas. v. 14.

The meaning of this whole commandment is, when you regard it to be your duty to fast, do it as a thing expressing deep feeling, or sorrow for sin; not by assuming unfelt gravity and moroseness, but in your ordinary dress and appearance; not to attract attention, but as an expression of feeling towards God, and he will approve and reward it.

19. *Lay not up for yourselves treasures, &c.* Treasures, or wealth, among the ancients, consisted in clothes, or changes of raiment, as well as in gold, silver, gems, wine, lands, and oil. Wealth was an abundance of any thing that was held to be conducive to the ornament or comfort of life. As the easterns delighted much in display, in splendid equipage, and costly garments, their treasures in fact consisted much in beautiful and richly ornamented articles of apparel. See Gen. xlv. 22, where Joseph gave to

selves treasures upon <sup>1</sup> earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal :

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in <sup>2</sup> heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal :

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxiii. 4. Luke xviii. 24, 25. Heb. xiii. 5. <sup>2</sup> Isa. xxxiii. 6. Luke xii. 33, 34. 1 Tim. vi. 19.

his brethren changes of raiment. Josh. vii. 21, where Achan coveted and secreted a goodly Babylonish garment. See also Judg. xiv. 12. This fact will account for the use of the word *moth*. When we speak of wealth, we think at once of gold, and silver, and lands, and houses. When a Hebrew or an orientalist spoke of wealth, he thought first of what would make display; and included, as an essential part, splendid articles of dress. The moth is a small insect that finds its way to clothes and garments, and destroys them. The moth would destroy their apparel, the rust their silver and gold; thus all their treasure would waste away.

20. *Lay up treasures in heaven.* That is, have provision made for your eternal felicity. Do not exhaust your strength, and spend your days, in providing for the life here, but let your chief anxiety be to be prepared for eternity. There nothing corrupts, nothing terminates, no enemies plunder or destroy. To have treasure in heaven is to possess evidence that its purity and joys will be ours. It is to be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. The heart, or affections, will of course be fixed on the treasure. To regulate the heart, it is therefore important that the treasure, or object of attachment, should be right.

22, 23. *The light of the body, &c.* The sentiment stated in the preceding verses, the duty of fixing the affections on heavenly things, Jesus proceeds to illustrate by a reference to the eye. When the eye is directed singly and steadily towards an object, and is in health, or is single, every thing is clear and plain. If it vibrates, flies to different objects, is fixed on no one singly,

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye: <sup>3</sup> if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness !

<sup>3</sup> Luke xi. 34, 36.

or is diseased, nothing is seen clearly. Every thing is dim and confused. The man, therefore, is unsteady. The eye regulates the motion of the body. To have an object distinctly in view, is necessary to correct and regulate action. Rope-dancers, in order to steady themselves, fix the eye on some object on the wall, and look steadily at that. If they should look down on the rope or the people, they would become dizzy and fall. A man crossing a stream on a log, if he will look across at some object steadily, will be in little danger. If he looks down on the dashing and rolling waters, he will become dizzy, and fall. So Jesus says, in order that the conduct may be right, it is important to fix the affections on heaven. Having the affections there, having the eye of faith single, steady, unwavering, all the conduct will be correspondent. ¶ *Single.* Steady, devoted to one object. Not confused, as persons' eyes are when they see double. ¶ *Thy body shall be full of light.* Your conduct will be regular and steady. All that is needful to direct the body is that the eye be fixed right. No other light is required. So all that is needful to direct the soul and the conduct is, that the eye of faith be fixed on heaven, that the affections be there. ¶ *If, therefore, the light that is in thee, &c.* The word *light*, here, signifies the mind, or principles of the soul. If this be dark, how great is that darkness ! The meaning of this passage may be thus expressed : The light of the body, the guide and director, is the eye. All know how calamitous it is when that light is irregular or extinguished, as when the eye is diseased or lost. So the light that is in us is the soul. If that soul is

24 ¶ No man can serve two masters: <sup>1</sup> for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iv. 10. Josh. xxiv. 15, 19, 20. 1 Sam. vii. 3. 1 Kin. xviii. 21. Luke xvi. 13.

detested by attending exclusively to earthly objects, if it is diseased, and not fixed on heaven, how much darker and more dreadful will it be than any darkness of the eye! Avarice darkens the mind, obscures the view, and brings in a dreadful and gloomy night over all the faculties.

24. *No man can serve two masters, &c.* Christ proceeds to illustrate the necessity of laying up treasures in heaven from a well-known fact, that a servant cannot serve two masters at the same time. His affections and obedience would be divided, and he would fail altogether in his duty to one or the other. One he would love, and the other hate. To the interests of one he would adhere, the other he would neglect. This is a law of human nature. The supreme affections can be fixed on only one object. So, says Jesus, the servant of God cannot at the same time obey him and be avaricious, or seek treasures supremely on earth. One interferes with the other, and one will be, and must be surrendered. \* *Mammon*. Mammon is a Syriac word, a name given to an idol worshipped as the god of riches. It has the same meaning as Plutus among the Greeks. It is not known that the Jews ever formally worshipped this idol, but they used the word to denote wealth. The meaning is: ye cannot serve the true God, and at the same time be supremely engaged in obtaining the riches of this world. One must interfere with the other. See Luke xvi. 9—11.

25—34. *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought, &c.* The general design of this paragraph, which closes the chapter, is to warn the disciples against avarice and anxiety about the supply of their wants. Jesus does this by four arguments or considerations, expressing by unequalled beauty and force, the duty of depending for the things which we need on the providence of God. The first is stated in the 25th verse: "*Is not the life more than meat, and the body than*

the other. Ye cannot <sup>2</sup> serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you. Take no thought <sup>3</sup> for your life, what

<sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 10. Jas. iv. 4. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 32. Phil. iv. 6.

raiment?" In the beginning of the verse he charged his disciples to take no thought, that is, not to be anxious, about the supply of their wants. God will take care of these. He has given life, a far greater blessing than meat; he has created the body, of far more consequence than raiment. Shall not he who has conferred the greater blessing, be willing to bestow the less? Shall not he, who has formed the body so curiously, and made such a display of power and goodness, see that it is properly protected and clothed? He who has displayed so great goodness as to form the body, and breathe into it the breath of life, will surely follow up the blessing, and confer the smaller favour of providing that that body should be clothed, and that life preserved. ¶ *No thought*. The word *thought*, when the Bible was translated, meant anxiety, and is so used frequently in old English authors. Thus Bacon says, "Haweis died with thought and anguish before his business came to an end." As such it is here used by our translators, and it answers exactly to the meaning of the original. Like many other words, it has since somewhat changed its signification, and would convey to most readers an improper idea. The word anxiety would now exactly express the sense, and is exactly the thing against which the Saviour would guard us. See Luke viii. 14; xxi. 34. Phil. iv. 6. Thought about the future is right; anxiety, solicitude, trouble, is wrong. There is a degree of thinking and industry about the things of this life which is proper. See Rom. xii. 11. 2 Thess. iii. 10. 1 Tim. v. 8. But it should not be our supreme concern; it should not lead to solicitude or anxiety; it should not take time that ought to be devoted to religion. ¶ *For your life*. For what will support your life. ¶ *Meat*. This word here means food in general, as it does commonly in the Bible. We confine it now to animal food, or the food of animals. When the Bible was translated, it de-

ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the<sup>1</sup> fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father<sup>2</sup> feedeth

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 29—31. Job xxxv. 11; xxxviii. 41. Psa. civ. 11, 12, 27, 28. <sup>2</sup> Job xxxviii. 41. Luke xii. 24.

noted all kinds of food, and is so used in the old English writers. It is one of the words which has changed its meaning since the translation of the Bible was made. ¶ *Raiment.* Clothing.

26. *Behold the fowls of the air.* The second argument for confidence in the providence of God is derived from a beautiful reference to the fowls of heaven. See, said the Saviour, see the fowls of the air: they have no anxiety about the supply of their wants; they do not sow or reap; in innumerable flocks they fill the air; they fill the grove with music, and meet the coming light of the morning with their songs, and pour their notes on the zephyrs of the evening, unanxious about the supply of their wants; yet how few die with hunger! how regularly are they fed from the hand of God! how he ministers to their unnumbered wants! He sees their young "open wide their mouths, and seek their meat at his hand," and how cheerfully and regularly are their necessities supplied! You, said the Saviour to his disciples, you are of more consequence than they are; and shall God feed them in such numbers, and suffer you to want? It cannot be. Put confidence, then, in that universal Parent that feeds all the fowls of the air, and fear not that he will also supply your wants. ¶ *Better than they.* Of more consequence. Your lives are of more importance than theirs, and God will therefore provide for them.

27. *Which of you by taking thought.* The third argument is taken from their extreme weakness and helplessness. With all your care you cannot increase your stature a single cubit. God has ordered your height. Beyond his appointment your powers are of no avail, and you can do nothing. So of raiment. He, by his

them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking<sup>3</sup> thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That

<sup>3</sup> Psa. xxxix. 6.

providence, orders and arranges the circumstances of your life. Beyond that appointment of his providence, beyond his care for you, your efforts avail nothing. Seeing, then, that he alike orders your growth, and the supply of your wants, how obvious is the duty of depending on him, and of beginning all your efforts, feeling that he only can grant you the means of preserving life. ¶ *One cubit.* The cubit was originally the length from the elbow to the end of the middle finger. The cubit of the scriptures is not far from twenty-two inches. Terms of length are often applied to life; and it is thought by many to be so here. Thus, it is said, "Thou hast made my days as a hand-breadth," Psa. xxxix. 5; "Teach me the measure of my days," Psa. xxxix. 4. In this place it is used to denote a small length. You cannot increase your stature even a cubit, or in the smallest degree. Compare Luke xii. 26. ¶ *Stature.* This word means height. The original word, however, means oftener age. John ix. 21, 23. In these places it is translated age. If this be its meaning here, it denotes that a man cannot increase the length of his life at all. The utmost anxiety will not prolong it one hour beyond the time appointed for death.

28, 29. The fourth consideration is taken from the lilies of the valley. Watch the growing of the lily. It toils not, and it spins not. Yet night and day it grows. With a beauty which the most splendid monarch of the east never knew, it expands its blossom and fills the air with fragrance. Yet this beauty is of short continuance. Soon it will fade, and the beautiful flower will be cut down and burned. God so little regards the bestowment of beauty and ornament as to give

even Solomon in all his glory<sup>1</sup> was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kin. x. 5-7.

the highest adorning to this which is soon to perish. When he thus clothes a lily—a fair flower, soon to perish—will he be unmindful of his children? Shall they—dear to his heart and imbued with immortality—lack that which is proper for them, and shall they in vain trust the God that decks the lily of the valley? He will much more clothe you. ¶ *Even Solomon in all his glory, &c.* The common dress of eastern kings was purple. But they sometimes wore white robes. See Est. viii. 15. Dan. vii. 9. It is to this that Christ refers. Solomon, says he, the richest and most magnificent king of Israel, was not clothed in a robe of so pure a white as the lily of the valley.

30. *Is cast into the oven.* The Jews had different modes of baking. In early times they frequently baked in the sand, warmed with the heat of the sun. They constructed also moveable ovens, made of clay, brick, or plates of iron. But the most common kind, and the one here probably referred to, was made by excavating the earth two and a half feet in diameter, and from five to six feet deep. This kind of oven still exists in Persia. The bottom was paved with stones. It was heated by putting wood or dry grass into the oven; and when heated, the ashes were removed, and the bread was placed on the heated stones. More commonly, however, the oven was an earthen vessel, without a bottom, about three feet high, smeared outside and inside with clay, and placed upon a frame, or support. Fire was made within it, or below it. When the sides were sufficiently heated, thin patches of dough were spread on the inside, and the top was covered, without removing the fire as in the other cases; and the bread was quickly baked.

32, 33. *For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.* That is, those destitute of the true doctrines of religion, un-

31 Therefore take no thought,<sup>2</sup> saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

<sup>2</sup> Psal. xxxvii. 3; lv. 22. 1 Pet. v. 7.

acquainted with proper dependence on divine providence, make it their chief anxiety thus to seek food and raiment. But you, who have a knowledge of your Father in heaven, who know that he will provide for your wants, should not be anxious. Seek first his kingdom; seek first to be righteous, and to become interested in his favour, and all necessary things will be added to you. God has control over all things, and he can give you that which you need. He will give you that which he deems best for you. ¶ *Take no thought, &c.* That is, no anxiety. Commit your way to God. The evil, the trouble, the anxiety of each day as it comes, is sufficient without perplexing the mind with restless cares about another day. It is wholly uncertain whether you live to see that day. If you do, it will bring its own trouble; and it will also bring the proper supply of your wants. God will be the same Father then as to-day, and will make then, as he makes now, proper provision for your wants. ¶ *The morrow shall take thought.* The morrow shall have anxieties and cares of its own, but it shall also bring the proper provision for those cares. Though you shall have wants, yet God will provide for them as they occur. Do not, therefore, increase the cares of this day by borrowing trouble respecting the future. Do your duty faithfully now, and depend on the mercy of God and his divine help for the troubles which are yet to come.

#### REMARKS ON CHAPTER VI.

I. Christ has here forcibly taught the necessity of charity, of prayer, and of all religious duties.

II. We see the necessity of sincerity and honesty in our religious duties. They are not done to be seen of men. If they are, they cannot be performed acceptably



what measure ye mete,<sup>1</sup> it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote<sup>2</sup> that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote

<sup>1</sup> Judg. i. 7. <sup>2</sup> 2 Sam. xii. 5, 6. 2 Chron. xxviii. 9—11. Psa. i. 16—21.

was a proverb among the Jews. It expressed a truth, and Christ did not hesitate to adopt it as conveying his own sentiments. It refers no less to the way in which men will judge of us, than to the rule by which God will judge us. See 2 Sam. xxii. 27. Mark iv. 24. Jas. ii. 13. ¶ *Mete*. Measure. You shall be judged by the same rule which you apply to others.

3. *And why beholdest thou the mote, &c.* A *mote* signifies any light substance, as dry chaff, or fine spires of grass or grain. It probably most usually signified the small *spicula* or beard on a head of barley or wheat. It is thus placed in opposition to the word *beam*. ¶ *Beam*. This word here signifies a large piece of squared timber. The one is an exceedingly small object, the other a large one. The meaning is, that we are much more quick and acute to judge of small offences in others, than of much larger offences in ourselves. Even a very small object that should hinder the vision of another, we should discern much more quickly than a much larger one in our own sight. This was also a proverb in frequent use among the Jews, and the same sentiment was common among the Greeks, and deserves to be expressed in every language.

5. *Thou hypocrite, first cast out, &c.* Christ directs us to the proper way of forming an opinion of others, and of reproving and correcting them. By first amending our own faults, or casting the beam out of our eye, we can consistently advance to correct the faults of others. There will then be no hypocrisy in our conduct. We shall also see clearly to do it. The beam, the thing that obscured our sight, will be removed; and we shall more clearly discern the small object that obscures the sight of our brother. The sentiment is, that the readiest way to judge of the imperfections

out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam<sup>3</sup> out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 ¶ Give not that which is holy

<sup>3</sup> Gal. vi. 1.

of others, is to be free from greater ones ourselves. This qualifies us for judging, makes us candid and consistent, and enables us to see things as they are, and to make proper allowances for frailty and imperfection.

6. *Give not that which is holy, &c.* By some, the word *holy* has been supposed to mean flesh offered in sacrifice, made holy, or separated to a sacred use. But it probably means here anything connected with religion—admonition, precept, or doctrine. *Pearls* are precious stones found in shell-fish, chiefly in India, in the waters that surround Ceylon. They are used to denote anything peculiarly precious. Matt. xiii. 45. Rev. xvii. 4; xviii. 12—16. In this place they are used to denote the doctrines of the gospel. *Dogs* signify men who spurn, oppose, and abuse that doctrine; men of peculiar sourness and malignity of temper, who meet it like growling and quarrelsome curs. 2 Pet. ii. 22. Rev. xxii. 15. *Swine* denote those who would trample the precepts under feet; men of impurity of life; corrupt, polluted, profane, obscene, and sensual; who would not know the value of the gospel, and who would tread it down as swine would pearls. Prov. xi. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 22. The meaning of this proverb, then, is: do not offer your doctrine to those violent and abusive men, who would growl and curse you; nor to those peculiarly debased and profligate, who would not perceive its value, would trample it down, and abuse you. This verse furnishes a beautiful instance of the introverted parallelism. The usual mode of poetry among the Hebrews, and a common mode of expression in proverbs and apothegms, was by the parallelism, where one member of a sentence answered to another, or expressed substantially the same sense with

the dogs, neither<sup>1</sup> cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you.

¶ Ask, and it shall be given you; <sup>2</sup> seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

For every one that asketh<sup>3</sup> receiveth; and he that seeketh<sup>4</sup> shall find; and to him that knocketh shall be opened.

Prov. ix. 7, 8; xxiii. 2. <sup>2</sup> Isa. lv. 6. Luke x. 1, <sup>3</sup> Psal. lxxxv. 10, 16. John xiv. 13, 14; xxi. 24. <sup>4</sup> 1 John iii. 22; v. 14, 16. <sup>5</sup> Prov. xv. 22, 23.

an addition or modification. See my introduction to Isaiah. Sometimes this is alternate, and sometimes it was introduced, where the first and fourth lines would correspond, and the second and third. This is the case here. The dogs would rend, and not the swine; the swine would trample the pearls under their feet, and not the dogs. It may be expressed:

Not that which is holy unto the dogs,  
Neither cast ye your pearls before swine,  
Lest they trample them under their feet,  
And turn again [that is, the dogs] and rend you.

—11. *Ask and it shall be given you,*

There are here three different forms of seeking the things which come from God, *asking, seeking, and knocking*. The latter is taken from the act of knocking at a door for admittance. Luke xiii. 25. Rev. iii. 20. The *ask* signify to seek with earnestness, diligence, and perseverance.

The promise is, that what we seek shall be given us. It is of course implied that we seek with a proper spirit, with simplicity, sincerity, and perseverance. It is implied, also, that we ask the things which it may be consistent for God to give—that is, things which he has promised to give, and which would be best for us and his kingdom. 1 John v. 14. That, God is to be the judge. And there is the utmost latitude which a creature can ask. God is willing to promise for us, to forgive our sins, to save our souls, to befriend us in trial, to comfort us in death, to extend the gospel through

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, <sup>5</sup> how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:

<sup>5</sup> Luke xi. 11.

the world. Man can ask no higher things of God; and these he may ask, assured that he is willing to grant them.

Christ encourages us to do this by the conduct of parents. No parent turns away his child with that which would be unsatisfactory or injurious. He would not give him a stone instead of bread, nor a serpent instead of a fish. God is better and kinder than the most tender earthly parents; and with what confidence, therefore, may we come as his children, and ask what we need! Parents, he says, are evil; that is, are imperfect, often partial, blind, and sometimes passionate; but God is free from all this, and therefore is ready and willing to aid us. ¶ *Every one that asketh receiveth*. That is, every one that asks aright, that prays in faith, and in submission to the will of God. He does not always give the very thing which we ask, but he gives what is better. A parent will not always confer the very thing which a child asks, but he will seek the welfare of the child, and give what he thinks will be most for its good. Paul asked that the thorn in his flesh might be removed. God did not literally grant the request, but told him that his grace should be sufficient for him. 2 Cor. xii. 7—9. ¶ *A fish*. A fish has some resemblance to a serpent. Yet no parent would attempt to deceive his child in this. So God will not give to us that which might appear to be of use, but which would be injurious.

12. *All things whatsoever, &c.* This command has been usually called the

for <sup>1</sup> this is the law and the prophets.

13 ¶ Enter ye in <sup>2</sup> at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xix. 18. Rom. xiii. 8—10. Gal. v. 14.  
<sup>2</sup> Luke xiii. 24.

Saviour's golden rule, a name given to it on account of its great value. All that you expect or desire of others in similar circumstances, do to them. Act not from selfishness or injustice, but put yourself in the place of the other, and ask what you would expect of him then. This would make you impartial, and candid, and just. It would destroy avarice, envy, treachery, unkindness, slander, theft, adultery, and murder. It has been well said that this law is what the balance-wheel is to machinery. It would prevent all irregularity of movement in the moral world, as that does in a steam-engine. It is easily applied, its justice is seen by all men, and all must acknowledge its force and value. ¶ *This is the law and the prophets.* That is, this is the sum or substance of the Old Testament. It is nowhere found in so many words, but it is a summary expression of all that the law required. The sentiment was in use among the Jews. Hillel, an ancient rabbi, said to a man who wished to become a proselyte, and who asked him to teach him the whole law, "Whatever is hateful to you, do not do to another." Something of the same sentiment was found among the ancient Greeks and Romans.

13, 14. *Enter ye in at the strait gate.* Christ here compares the way to life to an entrance through a gate. The words *straight* and *strait*, have very different meanings. The former means not crooked: the latter pent up, narrow, difficult to be entered. This is the word used here, and it means that the way to heaven is pent up, narrow, close, and not obviously entered. The way to death is open, broad, and thronged. The Saviour here referred probably to ancient cities. They were surrounded with walls, and entered through gates. Some of those, connected with the great avenues of the city, were

14 <sup>3</sup> Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few<sup>4</sup> there be that find it.

15 ¶ Beware of false prophets,<sup>5</sup> which come to you in sheep's cloth-

<sup>3</sup> Or, *hew*. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xx. 16; xxv. 1—12. Rom. ix. 27, 29. <sup>5</sup> Deut. xiii. 1—3. Jer. xxiii. 13—16. 1 John iv. 1.

broad, and admitted a throng. Others, for more private purposes, were narrow, and few would be seen entering them. So, says Christ, is the path to heaven. It is narrow. It is not the great highway that men tread. Few go there. Here and there one may be seen, travelling in solitude and singularity. The way to death, on the other hand, is broad. Multitudes are in it. It is the great highway in which men go. They fall into it easily, and without effort, and go without thought. If they wish to leave that, and go by a narrow gate to the city, it would require effort and thought. So, says Christ, diligence is needed to enter into life. See Luke xiii. 24. None go of course. All must strive to obtain it; and so narrow, unfrequented, and solitary is it, that few find it. This sentiment has been beautifully versified by Watts:—

"Broad is the road that leads to death,  
And thousands walk together there;  
But wisdom shows a narrower path,  
With here and there a traveller."

15. *False prophets.* The word *prophet* originally means, one who foretells future events. As prophets, however, were commonly regarded as public instructors on the subject of religion, the word came to denote all who were religious teachers. In this sense it is probably used here. A false prophet is a teacher of incorrect doctrine, or one falsely and unjustly laying claims to divine inspiration. It probably had reference to the false teachers then among the Jews. ¶ *Who come in sheep's clothing.* The sheep is an emblem of innocence, sincerity, and harmlessness. To come in sheep's clothing, is to assume the appearance of sanctity and innocence, when the heart is evil. ¶ *Ravening wolves.* Rapacious; or disposed to plunder. Applied

g, but inwardly they are ravening  
solves.

16 Ye shall know them by their  
ruits. Do men gather grapes of  
orns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree<sup>3</sup>  
ingeth forth good fruit; but a  
rupt tree bringeth forth evil  
it.

18 A good tree cannot bring  
rth evil fruit, neither *can* a cor-  
pt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every<sup>4</sup> tree that bringeth not  
rth good fruit is hewn down, and  
st into the fire.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xx. 29—31. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xii. 33. <sup>5</sup> Luke vi.  
45. <sup>6</sup> Ch. iii. 10. John xv. 2, 6.

the false teachers, it means that they  
sumed the appearance of holiness, in  
ler that they might the more readily  
the property of the people. They  
re full of extortion and excess. See  
st. xxiii. 25.

16. *Ye shall know them by their fruits.*  
gives the proper test of their character.  
n do not judge of a tree by its leaves,  
ark, or flowers, but by the fruit which  
bears. The flowers may be handsome  
d fragrant; the foliage thick and green;  
t these are merely ornamental. It is  
e fruit that is of chief service to man;  
d he forms his opinion of the nature  
d value of the tree by that fruit. So  
pretensions to religion. The profession  
y be fair; but the conduct—the fruit  
the eye of the world—is to determine  
e nature of the principles.

17. *A corrupt tree.* The word *corrupt*  
re does not signify, as our translation  
uld seem to indicate, that the tree had  
en good, but had become vitiated; but  
it it was a tree of a useless character,  
a nature that produces nothing bene-  
ial.

21. *Not every one that saith, &c.* He  
es on to say that many, on the ground  
that profession, will claim admittance  
o his kingdom. Many will plead that  
ey had done miracles, and preached  
prophesied much, and will demand  
entrance into heaven. The power of  
eking miracles had no necessary con-  
exion with piety. God may as well, if

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye  
shall know them.

21 ¶ Not every one that saith unto  
me, Lord, Lord,<sup>5</sup> shall enter into the  
kingdom of heaven; but he that  
doeth the will of my Father which  
is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that  
day, Lord, Lord, have we not pro-  
phesied<sup>6</sup> in thy name? and in thy  
name have cast out devils? and in  
thy name done many wonderful  
works?

23 And then will I profess

<sup>5</sup> Ch. xxv. 11, 12. Isa. xlviii. 1, 2. Luke vi.  
46; xiii. 25. Rom. ii. 13. <sup>6</sup> Num. xxiv. 4.  
1 Kin. xxii. 11—14. Jer. xxiii. 13—17. Acts  
xix. 13—15. 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

he chooses, give the power of raising the  
dead, to a wicked man, as the skill of  
healing to a wicked physician. A miracle  
is a display of his own power through the  
medium of another. An act of healing  
the sick is also a display of his power  
through the agency of another. In  
neither of these cases is there any necessary  
connexion with moral character. So of  
preaching, or prophesying. God may use  
the agency of a man of talents, though  
not pious, to carry forward his purposes.  
Saving power on the mind is the work of  
God; and he may convey it by any  
agency which he may choose. Accord-  
ingly, many may be found in the day of  
judgment who were endowed with powers  
of prophecy, or miracle, as Balaam, or  
the magicians of Egypt; in the same way  
as many men of distinguished talents may  
be found, yet destitute of piety, and shut  
out of his kingdom. See Mark ix. 38.  
Luke ix. 49. 1 Cor. xiii. 1—3. In this  
last place, Paul says, that though he  
spoke with the tongue of angels, and had  
the gift of prophecy, and could remove  
mountains, and had not charity or love,  
all would be of no avail. See my Notes  
on 1 Cor. xiii. 1—3.

22. *In that day.* That is, in the last  
day, the day of judgment; the time when  
the principles of all pretenders to pro-  
phesy and piety shall be tried.

23. *I profess unto them.* Say unto them;  
plainly declare. ¶ *I never knew you.*  
That is, I never approved, loved, or re-

unto them, I never knew you: depart from me,<sup>1</sup> ye that work iniquity.

24 ¶ Therefore<sup>2</sup> whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise<sup>3</sup> man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxv. 41. Psa. v. 5. Rev. xxii. 15.  
<sup>2</sup> Luke vi. 47, &c. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxl. 10; cxix. 99, 130.

garded you as my friends. See Psa. i. 6. 1 Cor. viii. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 19. This proves that, with all their pretensions, they had never been true followers of Christ. Jesus will not then say to false prophets and false professors of religion, that he had once known them and then rejected them, that they had been once Christians and then had fallen away; that they had been pardoned, and then had apostatized—but that he had never known them—they had never been true Christians. Whatever might have been their pretended joys, their raptures, their hopes, their self-confidence, their visions, their zeal, they had never been regarded by the Saviour as his true friends. I know not a more decided proof that Christians do not fall away from grace than this text. It settles the question; and proves that whatever else such men had, they never had any true religion. See 1 John ii. 19.

24—27. Jesus closes the sermon on the mount by a beautiful comparison, illustrating the benefit of attending to his words. It was not sufficient to hear them; they must be obeyed. He compares the man who should hear and obey him, to a man who built his house on a rock. Palestine was to a considerable extent a land of hills and mountains. Like other countries of that description, it was subject to sudden and violent rains. The Jordan, the principal stream, was annually swollen to a great extent, and became rapid and furious in its course. The streams which ran among the hills, whose channels might have been dry during some months in the year, became suddenly swollen with the rain, and would pour down impetuously into the plains below. Every thing in the way of these

the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.<sup>4</sup>

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish<sup>5</sup> man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds

<sup>4</sup> Psa. xc. 13—15. <sup>5</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30. Jer. viii. 9.

torrents would be swept off. Even houses erected within the reach of these sudden inundations, and especially if founded on sand, or any unsolid basis, would not stand before them. The rising, bursting stream would shake it to its foundation; the rapid torrent would gradually wash away its base; it would totter and fall, and be swept away. Rocks in that country were common, and it was easy to secure for their houses a solid foundation.

No comparison could, to a Jew, have been more striking. So, tempests, and storms of affliction and persecution, beat around the soul. Suddenly, when we think we are in safety, the heavens may be overcast; the storm may lower; and calamity beat upon us. In a moment, health, friends, comforts, may be gone. How desirable then to be possessed of something that the tempest cannot reach! Such is an interest in Christ; attention to his words; reliance on his promises; confidence in his protection; and a hope of heaven through his blood. Earthly calamities do not reach these; and, possessed of religion, all the storms and tempests of life may beat harmlessly around us.

There is another point in this comparison. The house built on the sand is beat upon by the floods and rains; its foundation gradually is worn away; it falls, and is borne down the stream, and is destroyed. So falls the sinner. The floods are wearing away his sandy foundation; and soon one tremendous storm shall beat upon him, and he and his hopes shall fall, for ever fall. Our Christ, perhaps having heard his word from very childhood; perhaps having taught them to others in the Sunday school; perhaps having been the mean

blew,<sup>1</sup> and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was<sup>2</sup> the fall of it.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 13. <sup>2</sup> Heb. x. 26, 27.

of laying the foundation on which others shall build for heaven, he has laid for himself no foundation; and soon an eternal tempest shall beat around his naked soul. How great will be that fall! What will be his emotions when sinking for ever in the flood, and destined for ever to live and writhe in the peltings of that ceaseless storm that shall beat when God shall rain snarls, fire, and a horrible tempest upon the wicked!

28, 29. *His doctrine.* His teaching. *¶ As one having authority and not as the Scribes.* The Scribes were the learned men and teachers of the Jewish nation, and were principally Pharisees. They taught chiefly the sentiments of their rabbins, and the traditions which had been delivered; they consumed much of their time in useless disputes, "vain jangling." Jesus was open, plain, grave, useful; delivering truth as became the oracles of God; not spending his time in trifling disputes, and debating questions of no importance; but confirming his doctrine by miracles and argument; teaching as having power, as it is in the original, and not in the vain and foolish manner of the Jewish doctors. He showed that he had authority to explain, enforce, and change the ceremonial laws of the Jews. He came with authority such as no man could have, and it is not remarkable that his explanations astonished them. From this chapter we may learn:—

I. The evil of censorious judging, ver. 1—5. We cannot see the heart. We have ourselves possibly greater faults than the persons that we condemn. They may be of a different kind; but it is not strange for persons to be very censorious towards faults in others, which they have to much greater extent themselves.

II. We see how we are to treat men who are opposers of the gospel, ver. 6. We are not to present it to them when we know they will despise it, and abuse us. We should, however, be cautious in forming that opinion of them. Many men may be far more ready to hear the gospel than we imagine; and a word reasonably and kindly spoken, may be the means of saving them. *Prov. xxv. 11.*

28 ¶ And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the

Ecc. xi. 6. We should not meet violent and wicked opposers of the gospel with a harsh, overbearing, and lordly spirit; a spirit of dogmatizing and anger; nor should we violate the laws of social intercourse under the idea of faithfulness. Religion gains nothing by outraging the established laws of social life. 1 Pet. iii. 8. If men will not hear us when we speak to them kindly and respectfully, we may be sure they will not when we abuse them, and become angry. We harden them against the truth, and confirm them in the opinion that religion is of no value. Our Saviour was always mild and kind; and in not a single instance did he do violence to the laws of social intercourse, or fail in the respect due from one man to another. When with harshness men speak to their superiors; when they abuse them with unkind words, and coarse epithets, and unfeeling denunciations; when children and youth forget their station, and speak in harsh, authoritative tones to the aged, they are violating the very first principles of the gospel, meekness, respect, and love. Give honour to whom honour is due, and be kind, be courteous.

III. Christ gives peculiar encouragement to prayer; ver. 7—11. Especially his remarks apply to the young. What child is there that would not go to his parent, and ask him for things which were necessary? What child doubts the willingness of a kind parent to give what he thinks will be best for him? But God is more willing to give than the best parent. We need of him gifts of far more importance than we ever can of an earthly father. None but God can forgive, enlighten, sanctify, and save us. How strange that many ask favours of an earthly parent daily and hourly, and never ask of the great universal Father a single blessing, for time or eternity!

IV. The danger of losing the soul; ver. 13, 14. The way to ruin is broad; the road to heaven is narrow. Men naturally and readily go in the former; they never go in the latter without design. When we enter on the journey of life, we naturally fall into the broad and

people were astonished<sup>1</sup> at his doctrine :

<sup>1</sup> Jer. xxiii. 29. Mark vi. 2.

thronged way to ruin. Our original propensity; our native depravity; our disinclination to God and religion, lead us to that. And we never leave it without effort. How much more natural to tread in a way in which multitudes go, than in one where there are few travellers, and which requires an effort to find it! And how much danger is there that we shall continue to tread in that way until it terminates in our ruin! No man is saved without effort. No man enters on the narrow way without design; no one by following his natural inclination and propensities. And yet how indisposed we are to effort; how unwilling to listen to the exhortations which would call us from the broad path to a narrower and less frequented course! How prone are men to feel that they are safe if they are with the many, and that the multitude that attend them constitute a safeguard from danger!

"Encompassed by a throng,  
On numbers they depend,  
They say so many can't be wrong,  
And miss a happy end."

Yet did God ever spare a guilty city because it was large! Did he spare the army of Sennacherib from the destroying angel because it was mighty! Does he hesitate to cut men down by the plague, the pestilence, and by famine, because they are numerous! Is he deterred from consigning men to the grave because they swarm upon the earth, and because a mighty throng is going to death! So in the way to hell. Not numbers, nor power, nor might, nor talent, in the broad way, will deter him or make that way safe; nor will the path to heaven be a dangerous road because few are seen travelling there. The Saviour knew and felt that men are in danger; and hence with much solemnity he warned them when he lived, and now warns us to strive to enter into the strait gate.

V. The necessity of sincerity in religion. ver. 15—23. Profession is of no value without it. God sees the heart. And the day is near when he shall cut down and destroy all those who do not bring forth the fruits of righteousness in their

29 For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the Scribes.

lives. If in any thing we should be honest and sincere, surely it should be in the things of religion. God is never deceived. Gal. vi. 7. And the things of eternity are of too much consequence to be lost by deluding ourselves or others. We may deceive our fellow men, but we do not delude our Maker; and soon he will strip off our thin covering, and show us as we are to the universe. If any thing is of prominent value in religion, it is honesty;—honesty to ourselves, our fellow men, and to God. Be willing to know the worst of your case. Be willing to be thought of by God and men as you are. Assume nothing which you do not possess; and pretend to nothing which you have not. Judge of yourselves as you do of others, not by words and promises, but by the life. Judge of yourselves as you do of trees, not by leaves and flowers, but by the fruit.

VI. The importance of building our hopes of heaven on a firm foundation. ver. 24—27. No other can any man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ. 1 Cor. iii. 11. He is the tried cornerstone. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 6. On an edifice raised on that foundation, the storms of persecution and calamity will beat in vain. Hopes thus reared sustain every adversity; are unshaken by the terrors of death; and secure us from the tempests of wrath that shall beat upon the guilty. How awful in the day of judgment, will it be to have been deceived! How dreadful the shock to find then the house built on the sand! How dreadful the emotions, to see our hopes totter on the brink of ruin! to see sand after sand washed away, and the dwelling reel over the heaving deep, and fall into the abyss, to rise no more! Ruin, awful and eternal ruin, awaits those who thus deceive themselves, and trust to a name to live, while they are dead.

VII. Under what obligation are we for this sermon on the mount. In all languages there is not a discourse to be found that can be compared with it for purity, and truth, and beauty, and dignity. Were there no other evidence of the divine mission of Christ, this alone would be sufficient to prove that he was sent from

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The leper cleansed, 1—4. Centurion's servant healed, 5—13. Peter's mother-in-law, 14, 15. Many miracles, 16, 17. Self-denial taught, 18—22. Storm hushed, 23—27. Miracle near Gergesa and herd of swine, 28—34.*

God. Were these doctrines obeyed, and loved, how pure and peaceful would be the world! How would hypocrisy be ashamed and confounded! How would impurity hang its head! How would peace reign in every family and nation! How would anger and wrath flee! And how would the race—the lost and benighted tribes of men, the poor, and needy, and sorrowful—bend themselves before their common Father, and seek peace and eternal life at the hands of a merciful and faithful God!

## CHAPTER VIII.

2. *There came a leper.* No disease with which the human family has been afflicted, has been more dreadful than that which is often mentioned in the Bible as the leprosy. It first exhibits itself on the surface of the skin. The appearance is not always the same, but it commonly resembles the spot made by the puncture of a pin, or the pustules of a ring-worm. The spots generally make their appearance very suddenly. Perhaps its appearance might be hastened by any sudden passion, as fear or anger. See Num. xii. 10. 2 Chron. xxvi. 19. The spots commonly exhibit themselves, at first, on the face, about the nose and eyes, and increase in size a number of years, till they become as large as a pea or a bean.

There are three kinds of leprosy, distinguished by the appearance of the spots: the white, the black, and the red leprosy. These spots, though few at first, gradually spread till they cover the whole body.

But though the appearance of the disease is at first in the skin, yet it is deeply seated in the bones, and marrow, and joints of the body. We have reason to suppose that in children it is concealed in the system for a number of years, till they arrive at the age of puberty; and in adults, for three or four years, till at last it gives fearful indications on the skin of its having gained a well-rooted and permanent ex-

**W**HEN he was come down from the mountain,<sup>1</sup> great multitudes followed him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper<sup>2</sup> and worshipped him, saying,

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 18; Ch. xii. 16; xv. 30. <sup>2</sup> Mark i. 40, &c. Luke v. 12—15.

istence. A leprous person may live twenty, or thirty, or even fifty years, if he received the disease at his birth, but they will be years of indescribable misery. The bones and marrow are pervaded with the disease. The malady advances from one stage to another with slow and certain ruin. Life still lingers amidst the desolation; the joints, and hands, and feet, lose their power; and the body collapses, or falls together, in a form hideous and awful. There is a form of the disease in which it commences at the extremities: the joints separate; the fingers, toes, and other members, one by one, fall off; and the malady thus gradually approaches the seat of life. The wretched victim is thus doomed to see himself dying piecemeal, assured that no human power can arrest for a moment the silent and steady march of this foe to the seat of life.

This disease is contagious and hereditary. It is easily communicated from one to another, and is transmitted to the third and fourth generation. The last generation that is afflicted with it commonly exhibits the symptoms by decayed teeth, and fetid breath, and diseased complexion.

Moses gave particular directions by which the real leprosy was to be distinguished from other diseases. See Lev. xiii. To avoid contagion the leprous person was very properly separated from the congregation. The inspection of the disease was committed to the priest; and a declaration on his part that the person was healed, was sufficient evidence to restore the afflicted man to the congregation. It was required also that the leprous person should bring an offering to the priest of two birds, commonly doves, one of which was slain, and the other dismissed. See Lev. xiv. In compliance with the laws of the land, Jesus directed the man that he had healed to make the customary offering, and to obtain the testimony of the priest that he was healed. The leprosy has once, and but once,



Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Klu. v. 14. Luke xvii. 14, 15.

appeared in America. This loathsome and most painful disease has in all other instances been confined to the old world, and chiefly to the eastern nations. It is matter of profound gratitude to a benignant God, that this scourge has been permitted but once to visit the new world. That awful calamity was in the island of Guadaloupe, in the West Indies, about the year 1730; and is thus described by an eye-witness: "Its commencement is imperceptible. There appear only some few white spots on the skin. At first they are attended with no pain or inconvenience; but no means whatever will remove them. The disease imperceptibly increases for many years. The spots become larger, and spread over the whole body. When the disease advances, the upper part of the nose swells, the nostrils become enlarged, and the nose itself soft. Tumours appear on the jaws; the eye-brows swell; the ears become thick; the points of the fingers, as also the feet and the toes swell; the nails become scaly; the joints of the hands and feet separate and drop off. In the last stage of the disease the patient becomes a hideous spectacle, and falls to pieces." ¶ *Worship him.* Bowed down before him, to show him respect. See Note, Matt. ii. 2. ¶ *If thou wilt.* This was an exhibition of great faith, and also an acknowledgment of his dependence on the will of Jesus, in order to be healed. So every sinner must come. He must feel that Jesus can save him. He must also feel that he has no claim on him; that it depends on his sovereign will; and must cast himself at his feet with the feelings of the leper:—

"I can but perish if I go;  
I am resolved to 'ry;  
For if I stay away, I know  
I shall for ever die."

Happily, no one ever came to Jesus

\* M. Peyssanel.

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell<sup>2</sup> no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded,<sup>3</sup> for a testimony unto them.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 30. Mark v. 43. <sup>3</sup> Lev. xiv.

with this feeling, who was not received, and pardoned. ¶ *Makes me clean.* Heal me. The leprosy was regarded as an unclean and disgusting disease. To be healed, therefore, was expressed by being cleansed from it.

3. *And Jesus—touched him.* It was an offence to the Jews to touch a leprous person, and was regarded as making him who did it ceremonially impure. Lev. xiii. 3. The act of putting forth his hand and touching him, therefore, expressed the intention of Jesus to cure him, and was a pledge that he was, in fact, already cured.

4. *See thou tell no man.* This command is to be understood as extending only to the time until he had made the proper representation to the priest. It was his duty to hasten to him immediately; not to delay by talking about it, but as the first thing, to obey the laws of God, and make proper acknowledgments to him by an offering. The place where this cure was wrought was in Galilee, a distance of forty or fifty miles from Jerusalem; and it was his duty to make haste to the residence of the priest, and obtain his sanction to the reality of the cure. Perhaps also Christ was apprehensive that the report would go before the man, if he delayed, and the priest, through opposition to Jesus, might pronounce it an imposition.

¶ *A testimony unto them.* Not to the priest, but to the people. Show thyself to the priest, and get his testimony to the reality of the cure, as a proof to the people that the healing is genuine. It was necessary that he should have that testimony, before he could be received to the congregation, or allowed to mingle with the people. Having this, he would be, of course, restored to the privileges of social and religious life, and the proof of the miracle, to the people, would be put beyond a doubt.

5 ¶ And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion,<sup>1</sup> beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy<sup>2</sup> that thou shouldst come under my

<sup>1</sup> Luke vii. 2—10. <sup>2</sup> Psa. x. 17. Luke xv. 19, 21.

3. *Capernaum.* See Note, ch. iv. 31. ¶ *There came unto him a centurion.* A centurion was a commander of a hundred men, in the Roman armies. Judea was a Roman province, and garrisons were kept there to preserve the people in subjection. This man was probably by birth a Pagan. See ver. 10.

6. *Sick of the palsy.* See Note, ch. ix. 24. The particular form which the palsy assumed is not mentioned. It seems it was a violent attack. Perhaps it was the painful form which produced violent cramps, and which immediately endangered his life.

8. *I am not worthy, &c.* This was an expression of great humility. It refers, doubtless, to his view of his personal unworthiness, and not merely to the fact that he was a Gentile. It was the expression of an humble spirit; a conviction of his great dignity and power of the Saviour, and a belief that he was so unlike him, that he was not fit that the Son of God should come into his dwelling. So every truly penitent sinner feels, a feeling which is appropriate when he comes to Christ.

9. *I am a man, &c.* He had full confidence in the ability of Jesus to heal his servant, and requested him simply to give the command. This request he presented in a manner appropriate to a soldier. *I am a man,* says he, *under authority.* That is, I am subject to the commands of others, and know how to obey. I have also under me soldiers who are accustomed to obedience. I say to one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes. I am prepared, therefore, to believe that your commands will be obeyed. *As these obey me, so do di-*

roof: but speak the word only,<sup>3</sup> and my servant shall be healed. ¶

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I

<sup>3</sup> Psa. xxxiii. 9; cvil. 20.

seases, storms, and seas obey you. If men obey me, who am an inferior officer, subject to another, how much more shall diseases obey you—the original source of power—having control over all things! He asked, therefore, simply that Christ would give commandment, and he felt assured he would be obeyed.

10. *I have not found so great faith.* The word *faith*, here, means confidence, or belief that Christ had power to heal his servant. It does not of necessity imply that he had saving faith; though from the connexion, and the spirit manifested, it seems probable that he had. If this was so, then he was the first Gentile convert to Christianity, and was a very early illustration of what was more clearly revealed afterwards, that the heathen were to be brought to the knowledge of the truth. ¶ *Jesus marvelled.* Or wondered at his faith; or deemed it remarkable. ¶ *Not in Israel.* Israel was a name given to Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 28, 29, because, as a prince, he had power with God; because he persevered in wrestling with the angel that met him, and obtained the blessing. The name is derived from two Hebrew words, signifying prince and God. He was one of the patriarchs; a progenitor of the Jewish nation; and the names Israel and Israelites were given to them as the name Romans was in honour of Romulus; and the name Americans after Americus Vesputius. It was given to the whole nation till the time of Jeroboam, when only the ten tribes that revolted received the name, probably because they were a majority of the nation. After the captivity of Babylon it was given to all the Jews indiscriminately. See Matt. x. 6. Mark xv. 32.

have not found so great faith,<sup>1</sup> no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, That<sup>2</sup> many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xv. 28. <sup>2</sup> Isa. li. 2, 3. Luke xlii. 29. Acts xi. 18. Eph. iii. 6. Rev. vii. 9.

Acts vii. 42. Heb. viii. 8. It here means, 'I have not found such an instance of confidence among the Jews.'

11. *Many shall come from the east, &c.* Jesus takes occasion from the faith of a Roman centurion, to state that this conversion would not be solitary; that many Pagans—many from the east and west—would be converted to the gospel, and be saved, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were. The phrase, *from the east and from the west*, in the scripture, is used to denote the whole world. Isa. xlv. 6; lix. 19. The phrase, *shall sit down*, in the original, refers to the manner of sitting at meals. See Note Matt. xxiii. 6; and the enjoyments of heaven are described under the similitude of a feast or banquet—a very common manner of speaking of them. Matt. xxv. 29. Luke xiv. 15; xxii. 30. The phrase is used here to denote felicity, enjoyment, or honour. To sit with those distinguished men was an honour, and would be expressive of great felicity.

12. *The children of the kingdom.* That is, the children, or the people, who expected the kingdom; or to whom it properly belonged; or, in other words, the Jews. They supposed themselves peculiarly the favourites of Heaven. They thought the Messiah would enlarge their nation, and spread the triumphs of their kingdom. They called themselves, therefore, the children of the members of the kingdom of God, to the exclusion of the Gentiles. Our Saviour used the manner of speech to which they were accustomed, and said that many of the Pagans would be saved, and many Jews lost. *¶ Shall be cast out into outer darkness, &c.* This is an image of future punishment. It is not improbable that the image was taken from Roman dungeons or prisons. They were commonly constructed under ground. *They were shut out from the light of the sun.* They were, of course, damp, dark,

12 But the children of the kingdom<sup>3</sup> shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping<sup>4</sup> and gnashing of teeth.

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed,<sup>5</sup> so be it done unto

<sup>3</sup> Ch. vii. 22, 23. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xiii. 42, 50. <sup>5</sup> Ch. ix. 27—29. John iv. 50—53.

and unhealthy, and probably most filthy. Masters were in the habit of constructing such prisons for their slaves, where the unhappy prisoner, without light or comfort, spent his days and nights in weeping from grief, and in vainly gnashing his teeth from indignation. The image expresses the fact, that the wicked who are lost will be shut out from the light of heaven, and from peace, and joy, and hope; will be confined in gloomy darkness; will weep in hopeless grief; and gnash their teeth in indignation against God, and murmur against his justice. What a striking image of future woe! Go to a damp, dark, solitary, and squalid dungeon; see a miserable and emaciated victim; add to his sufferings the idea of eternity, and then remember that this after all is but an image, a faint image, of hell! See Note on Matt. xxii. 13.

13. *He was healed in that self-same hour.* This showed decisively the goodness and power of Jesus. No miracle could be more complete. There could be no imposition or deception.

This account, or one similar to this, is found in Luke vii. 1—10. There has been a difference of opinion whether that was the same account, or whether a second centurion, encouraged by the success of the first, applied to our Saviour in a similar case and manner, and obtained the same success. In support of the supposition that they are different narratives, it is said that they disagree so far that it is impossible to reconcile them, and that it is not improbable that a similar occurrence might take place, and be attended with similar results.

To a plain reader, however, the narratives appears to be the same. They agree in the character of the person, the place, and apparently the time; in the same substantial structure of the account, the expression of similar feelings, and the

## CHAPTER VIII.

## Capernaum.

is servant was healed  
no hour.

when Jesus was come  
house, he saw his

and the same result. It is  
believe that all these cir-  
coincide in two differ-

however. Matthew says  
on came himself. Luke  
first sent elders of the  
his particular friends. He  
he was friendly to the  
built them a synagogue.  
ask, whether there is not  
contradiction? In ex-  
4, let it be remarked: 1.  
that the centurion came  
dence that others did not  
was in the city. The  
great favourite, and had  
e people many favours:  
e anxious that the favour  
ed of Jesus should be  
is suggestion, or of their  
r might apply to Jesus;  
bject upon him, and be  
esent the case as favour-

All this was probably  
d be in any other city, in  
ste and apparent con-  
ne observer might fix  
circumstance, and another  
is not at all improbable  
presentation and request  
both by the centurion and  
Matthew might have fixed  
ngly on the fact that the  
himself, and been par-  
with his deportment; and  
emarkable zeal shown by  
a heathen; the interest  
welfare, and the circum-  
iad done much for them.  
interesting circumstances,  
ratively have overlooked  
self. 2. It was a maxim  
, as it is now in law, that  
oes by another, he does  
esus is said to baptize,  
baptized by his disciples.  
; xix. 1. Matthew was  
great leading facts of the  
studious of brevity. He  
to explain the particular

wife's mother laid, <sup>1</sup> and sick of a  
fever.

15 And he touched her hand,  
and the fever left her: and

<sup>1</sup> Mark. i. 30, 31. Luke iv. 38, 39.

circumstances. He says that the cen-  
turion made the application, and received  
the answer. He does not say whether by  
himself, or by an agent. Luke explains  
particularly how it was done. There is  
no more contradiction, therefore, than  
there would be if it should be said of a  
man in a court of law, that he came and  
made application for a new trial, when  
the application was really made by his  
lawyer. Two men, narrating the fact,  
might exhibit the same variety that  
Matthew and Luke have done; and both  
be true.

One thing is most clearly shown by this  
narrative: that this account was not  
invented by the evangelists for the sake  
of imposition. If it had been, they  
would have agreed in all the circum-  
stances.

14, 15. This account is contained also  
in Mark i. 29—31, and Luke iv. 38, 39.  
Mark adds that Simon and Andrew lived  
together, and that James and John went  
with them to the house. He adds, also,  
that before the miracle, they spake to  
him about the sick person. The miracle  
was direct and complete. She was so  
completely restored as to attend them,  
and minister to them. The mention of  
*Peter's wife's mother*, proves that Peter  
either then was or had been married.  
The fair and obvious interpretation is,  
that his wife was then living. Compare  
1 Cor. ix. 5; and see Note on that place.  
Peter is claimed by the Roman catholics  
to be the head of the church, and the  
vicegerent of Christ. The pope, accord-  
ing to their view, is the successor of this  
apostle. On what pretence do they  
maintain that it is wrong for priests to  
marry? Why did not Christ at once  
reject Peter from being an apostle for  
having a wife? How remarkable that he  
should be set up as the head of the  
church, and an example and a model to  
all who were to succeed him. But all  
this is human law, and is contrary to the  
New Testament. That Peter had a wife  
was no objection to his being an apostle,  
and marriage has been expressly de-

she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 ¶ When the even was come, they brought unto him many <sup>1</sup> that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by *Isaiah* <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mark I. 32—34. <sup>2</sup> Isa. liii. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

clared to be honourable in all. Heb. xiii. 4.

16. *When the even was come, &c.*—The fame of the miracles of Jesus would probably draw together a crowd, and those who had friends that were afflicted would bring them. All that were brought to him he healed. This was proof of two things: first, his great benevolence; and secondly, his divine mission. He might have established the latter by miracles that would do no good. None of his miracles were performed, however, merely to make a display of power, unless the cursing of the barren fig-tree be an exception. Comp. Mark xi. 11—14. This was on the evening of the sabbath. Mark i. 21—32. The Jews kept the sabbath from evening to evening. Lev. xxiii. 32. On the sabbath they would not even bring their sick to be healed. Luke xiii. 14. But as soon as it was closed, on the evening of the same day, they came in multitudes to be cured. ¶ *Possessed with devils.* See Note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *With his word.* By his command; by a word.

17. *That it might be fulfilled, &c.* This passage is found in Isa. liii. 4. Our English translation of that important passage is, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." The Greek in Matthew is an exact translation of the Hebrew, and the same translation should have been made in both places. *Isaiah*, liii., fully states the doctrine of atonement, or that the Messiah was to suffer for sin. In the verse quoted here, however, the prophet states the very truth, which Matthew declares. The word translated *griefs*, in *Isaiah*, and *infirmities*, in Matthew, means properly, in the Hebrew and Greek, diseases of the body. In neither does it refer to the disease of the mind, or to sin. To bear those griefs, is clearly to bear

the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

18 ¶ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I <sup>3</sup> will

<sup>3</sup> Luke ix. 57, 58.

them away, or to remove them. This was done by his miraculous power in healing the sick. The word rendered *sorrows*, in *Isaiah*, and *sicknesses*, in Matthew, means pains, griefs, or anguish of mind. To carry, then, is to sympathize with the sufferers; to make provision for alleviating those sorrows; and to take them away. This he did by his precepts, his example; and the cause of all sorrows—sin—he removed by his atonement. The passages in *Isaiah* and Matthew, therefore, mean precisely the same thing. See *Magee* on Atonement, and my Notes on Isa. ch. liii.

18. *Unto the other side.* Jesus was now in Capernaum, a city at the north-west corner of the sea of Tiberias, or sea of Galilee. See Note, Matt. iv. 18. The country to which he purposed to go, was the region on the east of the sea of Tiberias.

19, 20. *A certain Scribe came, &c.* It is not improbable that this man, who had seen the miracles of Jesus, had formed an expectation that by following him he would obtain some considerable worldly advantage. Christ, in reply, proclaimed his own poverty, and dashed the hopes of the avaricious Scribe. The very foxes and birds, says he, have places of repose and shelter, but the Son of man has no home, and no pillow. He is a stranger in his own world; a wanderer and an outcast from the abodes of men. Comp. John i. 10, 11. ¶ *Son of man.* This means evidently Jesus himself. No title is more frequently given to the Saviour than this; and yet there is much difficulty in explaining it. The word *son* is used in a great variety of significations. See Note, Matt. i. 1. The name, *Son of man*, is given to Jesus only three times in the New Testament, Acts vii. 56; Rev. i. 13; xiv. 14, except by himself. When he speaks

follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the <sup>1</sup>birds of the air have nests; but the <sup>2</sup>Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxxiv. 3; civ. 17. <sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxix. 29. Isa. liii. 2. 3.

of himself, this is the most common appellation by which he is known. The phrase, *Son of God*, given to Christ, denotes a peculiar connexion with God. John x. 36. The name, *Son of man*, probably denotes a corresponding peculiar connexion with man. Perhaps he used it to signify the interest he felt in man; his peculiar love and friendship for him; and his willingness to devote himself to the best interests of the race. It is sometimes, however, used as synonymous with Messiah. Matt. xvi. 28. John i. 51; xii. 34. Acts vii. 56.

21. *And another of his disciples, &c.* The word *disciple* properly signifies learner; and was given to his followers, because they received him as their teacher. Note, Matt. v. 1. It does not of necessity mean that a disciple was a pious man, but only one of the multitude, who, for various causes, might attend on his instructions. See John vi. 66; ix. 28.

22. *Let the dead bury their dead.* The word *dead* is used in this passage in two different senses. It is apparently a paradox, but is fitted to convey his idea very distinctly to the mind. The Jews used the word *dead* often to express indifference towards a thing; or rather, to show that that thing has no influence over us. Thus, to be dead to the world; to be dead to the law, Rom. vii. 4; to be dead to sin, Rom. vi. 11; means that the world, law, and sin, have not influence or control over us; that we are free from them, and act as though they were not. A body in the grave is unaffected by the pomp and vanity, by the gaiety and merriment, by the ambition and splendour that may be near the tomb. So, men of the world are dead to religion. They see not its beauty; hear not its voice; are not won by its loveliness. This is the case of men to which the Saviour referred here. Let men, says he, who are interested in my work, and who are dead in sin, Eph. ii. 1, take care of the dead. *Your duty is now to follow me.*

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, <sup>3</sup>suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xix. 29. Deut. xxxiii. 9, 10. 1 Kin. xix. 20

There may have been two reasons for this apparently harsh direction. One was, to test the character and attachment of the man. If he had proper love for Christ, he would be willing to leave his friends even in the most tender and trying circumstances. This is required. Matt. x. 37. Luke xiv. 26. A second reason might have been, that if he returned, at that time, his friends might ridicule or oppose him, or present plausible arguments in the afflictions of the family, why he should not return to Christ. The thing to which he was called was moreover of more importance than any earthly consideration; and for that time, Christ chose to require of the man a very extraordinary sacrifice, to show his sincere attachment to him. Or it may have been, that the Saviour saw the effect of visiting his home at that time might have been to drive away all his serious impressions, and that he would return to him no more. This impression might not have been deep enough, and his purpose to follow our Saviour may not have been strong enough to bear the trial to which he would be subjected. Strange as it may seem, there are few scenes better fitted to drive away serious impressions than those connected with a funeral. We should have supposed it would be otherwise. But facts show it to be so; and show, that if this was one of the reasons which influenced the Saviour, he had a thorough knowledge of human nature. The arrangements for the funeral, the preparation of mourning apparel, and the depth of sorrow in such cases, divert the mind from its sins and its personal need of a Saviour; and hence few persons are awakened or converted as the result of death in a family. The case here was a strong one. It was as strong as can well be conceived. And the Saviour meant to teach by this that nothing is to be allowed to divert the mind from religion; nothing to be an excuse for not following him. Not even

23 ¶ And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, <sup>1</sup>there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves : but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to

<sup>1</sup> Mark iv. 37—41. Luke viii. 23—25.

the death of a father, and the sorrows of an afflicted family, are to be suffered to lead a man to defer religion, or to put off the purpose to be a Christian. That is a fixed duty, a duty not to be deferred or neglected, whether in sickness or health; at home or abroad; whether surrounded by living and happy kindred, or whether a father, a mother, a child, or a sister lies in our house dead.

It is the regular duty of children to obey their parents, and to show them kindness in affliction, and to evince proper care and respect for them when dead. Nor did our Saviour show himself insensible to these duties. He taught here, however, as he always taught, that a regard to friends and ease, and comfort, should be subordinate to the gospel; and that we should always be ready to sacrifice these when duty to God requires it.

23. *Into a ship.* This was on the sea of Tiberias. The ship in which they sailed was probably a small open boat, with sails, such as were commonly used for fishing on the lake. ¶ *His disciples.* Not merely the apostles, but probably many others. There were many other ships in company with him. Mark ix. 38. The circumstance would make the miracle much more striking and impressive.

24. *A great tempest.* A violent storm; or a wind so strong as to endanger their lives. The lake was subject to such storms. ¶ *The ship was covered with the waves.* The waves dashed against the ship. Mark ix. 37, so that it was in danger and in danger of sinking. ¶ *He was asleep.* The Saviour had been awake all night. Mark ix. 38. It was in the night that Jesus had rebuked the winds, and the sea, and they were calm. The disciples were now in the ship, and the storm was raging against them.

him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us : we perish.<sup>2</sup>

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked<sup>3</sup> the winds and the sea ; and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, say-

<sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. xiv. 11; xl. 6—12. <sup>3</sup> Job xxxviii. 11. Psal. lxxxix. 9; cvii. 29.

disciples how calmly one can sleep with a pure conscience, and who feels safe in the hands of God.

25. *Save us.* Save our lives. ¶ *We perish.* We are in danger of perishing. This showed great confidence in the Saviour. It shows, also, where sinners and Christians should always go, who feel that they are in danger of perishing. There is none that can save from the storms of divine wrath but the Son of God.

26. *Why are ye fearful?* You should have remembered that the Son of God, the Messiah, was on board. You should not have forgotten that he had power to save, and that with him you are safe. No Christians should never fear danger, disease, or death. With Jesus they are safe. No enemy can reach him; and as he is safe, so they shall be also. John xiv. 19. ¶ *Rebuked the winds.* Reproved them; or commanded them to be still. What a power was this! What irresistible proof that he was divine! His word averted the tempest, and allayed the storm! There is not, anywhere, a sublimer description of a display of power. Nor could there be sublimer proof that he was truly the Son of God. ¶ *The winds were still;* and the sea ceased to dash against the vessel, and to endanger their lives.

27. *Men marvelled.* Wondered; or were amazed. ¶ *What manner of man.* What power! How unlike other men. What a sublime display of power; and how it excited above mortals must be he.

The sailors in the winds; rebuked their tempest, and the sea was suddenly calm. The storm subsided; the sky glided serene; a larger fell, and in amazement they saw the presence of God who showed the tempest that God had passed, and they felt that he must

18.<sup>1</sup> What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

28 ¶ And when he was come

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiv. 33; xv. 31. Mark i. 27.

God himself. None but God could calm the heaving billows, and scatter the tempest. No scene could have been more grand than this display of the power of Jesus. The darkness; the dashing waves; the howling winds; the heaving and tossing ship; the fears and cries of the seamen; all by a single word hushed into calm repose; all present an image of power and divinity irresistibly grand and awful. So the tempest rolls and hickens over the head of the awakened sleeper. So he trembles over immediate and awful destruction. So while the storm of wrath howls, and hell threatens to engulf him, he comes trembling to the Saviour. He hears; he rebukes the storm; and the sinner is safe. An indescribable peace takes possession of the soul; and he glides on a tranquil sea to the haven of eternal rest. See Isa. lvii. 20, 21. Rom. v. 1. Phil. iv. 7.

29—34. The same account of the demoniacs substantially is found in Mark v. 1—20, and Luke viii. 26—39.

29. *The other side.* The other side of the sea of Tiberias. ¶ *Country of the Gergesenes.* Mark, ch. v. 1, says that he came into the country of the Gadarenes. This difference is only apparent. Gadara was a city not far from the lake Genezareth; one of the ten cities that were called Decapolis. Note, Matt. iv. 25. Gergesa was a city about twelve miles to the south-east of Gadara, and about twenty miles to the east of the Jordan. There is no contradiction, therefore, in the evangelists. He came into the region in which the two cities were situated, and one mentioned one, and the other another. It shows that the writers had not agreed to impose on the world: for if they had, they would have mentioned the same city; and it shows they were familiar with the country. No man would have written in this manner, but those who were acquainted with the facts. Imposters do not mention places, or names, if they can avoid it. ¶ *There met him two.* Mark and Luke speak of only one that met him. "There met him out of the tombs

to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils,<sup>2</sup> coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce,

<sup>2</sup> Mark v. 1—10. Luke viii. 26—36.

a man." Mark v. 2. "There met him out of the tombs a certain man." Luke viii. 27. This difference of statement has given rise to considerable difficulty. It is to be observed, however, that neither Mark nor Luke says that there was no more than one. For particular reasons they might have been led to fix the attention on one of them that was more notorious, and furious, and difficult to be managed. Had they denied plainly that there was more than one, and had Matthew affirmed that there were two, there would have been an irreconcilable contradiction. As it is, they relate the affair as other men would. It shows that they were honest witnesses. Had they been impostors; had Matthew and Luke agreed to write books to deceive the world, they would have agreed exactly in a case so easy as this. They would have told the story with the same circumstances. Witnesses in courts of law often differ in unimportant matters; and, provided the main narrative coincides, their testimony is thought to be more valuable.

Luke has given us a hint why he recorded only the cure of one of them. He says, there met him "out of the city," a man, &c.; or, as it should be rendered, a man of the city, a citizen. Yet the man did not dwell in the city; for he adds in the same verse, "neither abode he in any house but in the tombs." The truth of the case was, that he was born and educated in the city; he had probably been a man of wealth and eminence; he was well known, and the people felt a deep interest in the case. Luke was, therefore, particularly struck with his case, and as his cure fully established the power of Jesus, he recorded it. The other that Matthew mentions was probably a stranger, or a person less notorious as a maniac, and he felt less interest in the cure. Let two persons go into a lunatic asylum, and meet two insane persons, one of whom should be exceedingly fierce and ungovernable, and well known as having been a man of worth and stand-



so that no man might pass by that way.

20 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, 'thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding.

31 So the devils besought him,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iv. 3. Mark iii. 11. Acts xvi. 17. Isa. ii. 9.

ing; let them converse with them; and let the more violent one attract the principal attention, and they would very likely give the same account that Matthew and Luke do; and no one would doubt the statement was correct. ¶ *Possessed with devils.* See Note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *Coming out of the tombs.* Mark and Luke say that they dwelt in the tombs. The sepulchres of the Jews were commonly caves, beyond the walls of the cities in which they dwelt, or excavations made in the sides of hills, or sometimes in solid rocks. These caves, or excavations, were sometimes of great extent. They descended to them by flights of steps. These graves were not in the midst of cities, but in groves, and mountains, and solitudes. They afforded, therefore, to insane persons and demoniacs retreat and shelter. Such persons delighted in these gloomy and melancholy recesses, as being congenial to the wretched state of their minds. Josephus, also, states that these sepulchres were the haunts and lurking places of those desperate bands of robbers that infested Judea. See my Notes on Isa. lxx. 4.

29. *What have we to do with thee?* This might have been translated with great propriety, What hast thou to do with us! The meaning is, Why dost thou trouble or disturb us! See 2 Sam. xvi. 10. 2 Kin. ix. 18. Ezra iv. 3. ¶ *Son of God.* The title, *Son of God*, is often given to Christ. Men are sometimes called sons, or children of God, to denote their piety and adoption into his family. 1 John iii. 1. But the title given to Christ denotes his superiority to the prophets. Heb. i. 1; to Moses, the founder of the Jewish economy, Heb. iii. 6; it denotes his peculiar and near relation to the Father, as evinced by his resurrection, Psa. ii. 7.

saying, If thou cast us out, suffer<sup>1</sup> us to go away into the herd of swine.<sup>2</sup>

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold,<sup>3</sup> the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them fled,

<sup>2</sup> Job 1. 10—12; ii. 3—6. <sup>3</sup> Dent. xiv. 8. Isa. lxx. 3, 4. <sup>4</sup> Acts xix. 13—17.

Acts xiii. 33; it denotes his peculiar relation to God from his miraculous conception, Luke i. 35; and is equivalent to a declaration, that he is divine, or equal to the Father, John x. 36. ¶ *Art thou come hither to torment us, &c.* By the time here mentioned, is meant the day of judgment. The bible reveals the doctrine that evil spirits are not now bound as they will be after that day; that they are permitted to tempt and afflict men, but that in the day of judgment they also will be condemned to everlasting punishment with all the wicked. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. These spirits seemed to be apprized of that, and alarmed lest the day that they feared had come. They besought him, therefore, not to send them out of that country; not to consign them then to hell, but to put off the day of their final punishment.

Mark and Luke say that Jesus inquired the name of the principal demoniac, and that he called his name *Legion*, for they were many. The name legion was given to a division in the Roman army. It did not always denote the same number; but in the time of Christ it consisted of six thousand, three thousand foot and three thousand horsemen. It came, therefore, to signify a large number, without specifying the exact amount.

30. *A herd of swine.* The word *herd*, here applied to swine, is now commonly given to cattle. Formerly it signified any collection of beasts, or even of men. The number that composed this herd was two thousand. Mark v. 13.

33. *They that kept them fled.* These swine were doubtless owned by the inhabitants of Gadara. Whether these people were Jews or Gentiles is uncertain. The town was not properly in the territory of

went their ways into the city, told everything, and what was

befallen to the possessed of the devils.

ea: but as it was on its borders, it is able that the inhabitants were a rare of Jews and Gentiles. Swine to Jews unclean animals, and it was awful for them to eat them. Lev. 11. The Jews were forbidden by their laws to keep them, even for the sake of traffic. Either, therefore, they had expressly violated the law, or the swine were owned by the Gentiles. The keepers fled in consternation. They were amazed at his power. Perhaps they feared a further destruction of property; or, more likely, they were grieved with the laws of the Jews, regarded this as a judgment of Heaven for keeping forbidden animals, and for tempting the Jews to violate the commands of God. They dreaded, perhaps, their punishment, and foolishly came to besought Jesus to depart from their country.

This is the only one of our Saviour's miracles, except the case of the fig-tree; he cursed, Matt. xxi. 18—20, in which he caused any destruction of property. It is a striking proof of his violence, that his miracles tended chiefly to the comfort of mankind. It is a proof of goodness added to the chief purpose for which his miracles were wrought. That purpose was to continue his divine mission; and it might have been as fully done by splitting rocks, or moving mountains, or causing water to gush up steep hills, as by any other display of power. See Acts ii. 22. He chose to exhibit the proof of his divine power, never, in such a way as to benefit mankind.

Infidels have objected to this whole narrative. They have said that this is a wanton and unauthorized violation of private rights in the destruction of property. They have said that the count of devils going into swine, and troying them, is ridiculous. In regard to these objections the narrative is fully vindicated. 1. If Christ, as the Bible declares, be divine as well as human God as well as man—then he had an original right to that and all other property, and might dispose of it as he pleased. Psa. l. 10—12. *If God had destroyed them by pestilence, or by*

lightning, or by an inundation or earthquake, neither the owners, nor any one else, would have had reason to complain. No one now feels that he has a right to murmur if God destroys a thousand times the amount of this property, by overturning a city by an earthquake. Why then should complaints be brought against him if he should do the same thing in another way? 2. If this property was held by the Jews, it was a violation of their law, and it was right that they should suffer the loss; if by the Gentiles, it was known also to be a violation of the law of the people among whom they lived; a temptation and a snare to them; and an abomination in their sight; and it was proper that the nuisance should be removed. 3. The cure of two men, one of whom was probably a man of distinction and property, was of far more consequence than the amount of property destroyed.

To restore a deranged man now, of family and standing, would be an act for which property could not compensate, and which could not be measured in value by any pecuniary consideration. But, 4. Jesus was not at all answerable for this destruction of property. He did not command, he only suffered or permitted the devils to go into the swine. He commanded them merely to come out of the man. They originated the purpose of destroying the property, doubtless for the sake of doing as much mischief as possible, and of destroying the effect of the miracle of Christ. In this they seem to have had most disastrous success; and they only are responsible. 5. If it should be said that Christ permitted this, when he might have prevented it, we reply, that the difficulty does not stop there. He permits all the evil that exists, when he might prevent it. He permits men to do much evil, when he might prevent it. He permits one bad man to injure the person and property of another bad man. He permits the bad to injure the good. He often permits a wicked man to fire a city, or to plunder a dwelling, or to rob a traveller, destroying property of many times the amount that was lost at Gadara.

Why is it any more absurd to suffer a wicked spirit to do injury, than a wicked man; or to suffer a legion of devils to

*The Gergesenes' entreaty.* MATTHEW.

A.D. 31.

34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus : and when they saw him,<sup>1</sup> they besought

<sup>1</sup> Deut. v. 25. 1 Sam. xvi. 4.

him that he would depart<sup>2</sup> out of their coasts.

<sup>2</sup> Job xxi. 14. Luke v. 8. Acts xvi. 39.

destroy a herd of swine, than for legions of men to desolate nations, and cover fields and towns with ruin and slaughter!

34. *The whole city came out.* The people of the city probably came with a view of arresting him for the injury done to the property; but seeing him, and being awed by his presence, they only besought him to leave them. ¶ *Out of their coasts.* Out of their country. This shows : 1. That the design of Satan is to prejudice men against the Saviour, and even to make what Christ does an occasion why they should desire him to leave them. 2. The power of avarice. These men preferred their property to the Saviour. They loved it so much, that they were blind to the evidence of the miracle, and to the good he had done to the miserable men that he had healed. It is no uncommon thing for men to love the world so much; to love property, even like that owned by the people of Gadara, so much as to see no beauty in religion, and no excellence in the Saviour; and, rather than part with it, to beseech Jesus to withdraw from them. The most grovelling employment, the most abandoned sins, the most loathsome vices, are often loved more than the presence of Jesus, and more than all the blessings of his salvation.

REMARKS.

I. The leprosy, the disease mentioned in this chapter, is an apt representation of the nature of sin. Like that, sin is loathsome; it is deep fixed in the frame; penetrating every part of the system; working its way to the surface imperceptibly, but surely; loosing the joints, and consuming the sinews of moral action; and adhering to the system, till it terminates in eternal death. It goes down from age to age. It shuts out men from the society of the pure in heaven, nor can man be elevated there, till God has cleansed the soul by his Spirit, and man is made pure and whole.

II. The case of the centurion is a strong instance of the nature and value of humility. Ver. 5—10. He sustained a fair character, and had done much for

the Jews. Yet he had no exalted conception of himself. Compared with the Saviour, he felt that he was unworthy that he should come to his dwelling. So feels every humble soul. Humility is an estimate of ourselves as we are. It is a willingness to be known, and talked of, and treated, just according to truth. It is a view of ourselves as lost, poor, and wandering creatures. Compared with other men, with angels, with Jesus, and with God, it is a feeling by which we regard ourselves as unworthy of notice. It is a readiness to occupy our appropriate station in the universe, and to put on humbleness of mind as our proper array. 1 Pet. v. 5.

III. We have here an equally beautiful exhibition of faith. The centurion had unwavering confidence in the power of Jesus. He did not doubt at all that Jesus was able to do for him just what he needed, and what he wished him to do. This is faith; and every man who has this trust or confidence in Christ for salvation has saving faith.

IV. Humility and faith are always connected. The one prepares the mind for the other. Having a deep sense of our weakness and unworthiness, we are prepared to look to him who has strength. Faith also produces humility. Jesus was humble; and believing on him, we catch his spirit, and learn of him. Matt. xi. 28—30. Compared with him, we see our unworthiness. Seeing his strength, we see our feebleness, seeing his strength exerted to save creatures, impure and ungrateful as we are, we sink away into an increased sense of our unfitness for his favour.

V. We see the compassion and kindness of Jesus. Ver. 16, 17. He has borne our heavy griefs. He provides comfort for us in sickness, and sustains us in dying. But for his merciful arm, we should sink; and dying, we should die without hope. But

"Jesus can make a dying bed,  
Feel soft as downy pillows are;  
Whilst on his breast we lean our head,  
And breathe our life out sweetly there."

VI. We are forcibly struck with his

CHAPTER IX.

*A paralytic cured, 1—8. Matthew called, 9. A feast with publicans, &c., 10—13. Christ's disciples in joy while he was with them, 14—17. Jairus and his daughter, the woman with the issue, and the two blind*

*men, 18—31. A dumb demoniac cured, 32—34. Christ's compassion on the multitude, 35—38.*

AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

condescension. Ver. 19, 20. Men of wickedness and crime dwell in splendid mansions, and stretch themselves on couches of ease; when afflicted, they recline on beds of down, but Jesus had no home, and no pillow. The birds that fill the air with music, and warble in the groves, nay, the very foxes have homes and a shelter from the storms and elements; but he that made them, clothed in human flesh, was a wanderer, and had not where to lay his head. His sorrows he bore alone; his dwelling was in the mountains. In the palaces of the men for whom he toiled, and for whom he was about to bleed on a cross, he found no home, and no sympathy. Surely this was compassion worthy of a God.

VII. It is no disgrace to be poor. The Son of God was poor; and it is no dishonour to be like him. If our Maker, then, has cast our lot in poverty, if he takes away by sickness or calamity the fruits of our toils, if he clothes us in homely and coarse apparel, if he bids the winds of heaven to howl around our open and lonely dwellings, let us remember that the Redeemer of mankind trod the same humble path; and that it can be no dishonour to be likened to him who was the beloved Son of God.

VIII. We should be willing to embrace the gospel without hope of earthly reward. Ver. 19—23. Religion promises no earthly honours or wealth. It bids its disciples to look beyond the grave for its highest rewards. It requires men to love religion for its own sake; to love the Saviour, even when poor, and cast out, and suffering, because he is worthy of love; and to be willing to forsake all the allurements which the world holds out to us, for the sake of the purity and peace of the gospel.

IX. We learn the necessity of forsaking all for the sake of the gospel. Our first duty is to God, our Creator, and Saviour; our second to friends, and relations, and country. Ver. 22. When God commands, we must follow him, nor should any consideration of ease, or

safety, or imaginary duty deter us. To us it is of no consequence what men say or think of us. Let the will of God be prayerfully ascertained, and then let it be done though it carry us through ridicule, racks, and flames.

X. Jesus can preserve us in the day of danger. Ver. 23—27. He hushed the storm, and the disciples were safe. His life was also in danger with theirs. Had the ship sunk, without a miracle, he would have perished with them. So in every storm of trial or persecution, in every heaving sea of calamity, he is united to his followers. His interest and theirs is the same. He feels for them, he is touched with their infirmities, and he will sustain them. Because I live, says he, ye shall live also. Never, never, then, shall man or devil pluck one of his faithful followers from his hand. John x. 27, 28.

XI. All that can disturb or injure us is under the control of the Christian's Friend. Ver. 28—32. The very inhabitants of hell are bound, and beyond his permission they can never injure us. In spite then of all the malice of malignant beings, the friends of Jesus are safe.

XII. It is no uncommon thing for men to desire Jesus to depart from them. Ver. 34. Though he is ready to confer on them important favours, yet they hold his favours to be of far less consequence than some unimportant earthly possession. Sinners never love him, and always wish him away from their dwellings.

XIII. It is no uncommon thing for Jesus to take men at their word, and leave them. He gives them over to worldly thoughts and pursuits; he suffers them to sink into crime, and they perish for ever. Alas how many are there like the dwellers in Gadara, that ask him to depart, that see him go without a sigh, and that never, never again behold him coming to bless them with salvation.

CHAPTER IX.

1. And he entered into a ship, &c. Jesus acceded to the request of the people

2 And,<sup>1</sup> behold, they brought to

<sup>1</sup> Mark ii. 3—12. Luke v. 18—26.

of Gadara, recrossed the lake of Genesareth, and returned to his own city. By *his own city* is meant Capernaum, Mark ii. 1, the city which was at that time his home, or where he had his dwelling. See ch. iv. 13. This same account, with some additional circumstances, is contained in Mark ii. 3—12, and Luke v. 18—26.

2. *A man sick of the palsy.* See Note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *Lying on a bed.* This was probably a mattress, or perhaps a mere blanket spread to lie on, so as to be easily carried. Being light, Jesus might with propriety command him to take it up and walk. Ver. 6.

Mark says, "they uncovered the roof." Ch. ii. 4. Luke says, "they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling." Ch. v. 19. To us it would appear that much injury must have been done to the house where Jesus was, and that they must be much incommoded by the removal of tiles and rafters, &c. An acquaintance, however, with the mode of building in the east, removes every difficulty of this nature. Houses, in eastern countries, are commonly square in their form, and of a single story. On approaching them from the street, a single door is seen in the centre, and, usually, directly above it a single latticed window. This destitution of doors and lights from the streets, though it gives their dwellings a sombre appearance, is yet adapted to the habits of retirement and seclusion among the people of the east, where they are desirous of keeping their females from observation. On entering the only door in front, the first room is a small square room, surrounded with benches, called the porch. In this room the master of the family commonly transacts business, and, on private occasions, receives visits. Passing through the porch, you enter a large square room directly in the centre of the building, called the court. Luke says that the paralytic was let down "into the midst;" not in the midst of the people, but of the building, the middle place of the house. This court is paved commonly with marble; and, if possible, a fountain of water is formed in the centre, to give it beauty, and to diffuse a grateful coolness. This room is surrounded by a gallery, or covered

him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their

walk on every side. From that covered walk, doors open into the other apartments of the house.

This centre room, or court, is commonly uncovered or open above. In wet weather, however, and in times of great heat of the sun, it is covered with an awning or canvas, stretched on cords, and capable of being easily removed or rolled up. This is what Mark means when he says they uncovered the roof. They rolled up or removed this awning.

From the court to the roof the ascent is by flights of stairs, either in the covered walk or gallery, or in the porch. The roof is nearly flat. It is made of earth; or in houses of the rich is a firmly constructed flooring, made of coals, chalk, gypsum, and ashes, made hard by repeated blows. On those roofs spears of grass, wheat, or barley, sometimes spring up; but these are soon withered by the sun. Isa. cxxix. 6—8. The roof is a favourite place for walking, for repose in the cool of the day, for conversation, and for devotion. Note, Matt. vi. 6. On such a roof Rahab concealed the spies, Josh. ii. 6; Samuel talked with Saul, 1 Sam. ix. 25; David walked at eventide, 2 Sam. xi. 2; and Peter went up to pray, Acts x. 9. This roof was surrounded with a balustrade, or railing, breast-high, on the sides; but where a house was contiguous to another, and of the same height, the railing was lower, so as to walk from one roof to another. In cities constructed in this manner, it was possible to walk through a considerable part of the city on the roofs of the houses. A breast-work or railing was of course built in the same manner around the open space in the centre, to prevent them from falling into the court below. This railing, or breast-work, is what Luke, ch. v. 19, says they let him down through. They removed it probably so that the couch could be conveniently let down with cords; and standing on the roof over the Saviour, they let the man down directly before him. The perseverance they had manifested was the evidence of their faith or confidence in his power to heal the sick man.

Suppose the Saviour to be seated in the open court or centre room which was

with said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.<sup>2</sup>

4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts<sup>3</sup> said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxii. 1, 2. Isa. xl. 1, 2. Mark v. 34. Ch. xxvi. 64, 65. John x. 33—36. <sup>2</sup> Psa. cxxxix. John ii. 24, 25. Heb. iv. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 23.

wronged. It had but one way of access from the street and at this entrance the crowd was so great that the sick man could not be got through to Jesus. They who carried him would of course go up the flight of stairs, and come to the spot directly over where Jesus was sitting. There they would remove a part of the saluistrade, or breastwork, and let the sick man down directly before him. ¶ *Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.* It may seem remarkable that since the man came only to be healed, Jesus should have first declared his sins forgiven. For his the following reasons may be suggested: 1. The man might have brought on this affection of the palsy by a long course of vicious indulgence. Conscious of guilt, he may have feared that he was so great a sinner that Christ would not regard him. He therefore assured him that his offences were pardoned, and that he might lay aside his fears. 2. Jesus might be willing to show his power to forgive sins. Had he stated it without any miracle, the Jews would not have believed it, and even his disciples might have been staggered. In proof of it, he worked a miracle; and no one, therefore, could doubt that he had the power. The miracle was wrought in express attestation of the assertion that he had the power to forgive sins. As God would not work a miracle to confirm a falsehood, or to deceive men, the miracle was a solemn confirmation, on the part of God, that Jesus had the power to forgive sins. 3. The Jews regarded disease as the effect of sin. John ix. 2. Jas. v. 14, 15. There is a real connexion between sin and suffering, as in the case of *gluttony, intemperance, &c.* *lewdness, debauchery.* Jesus

5 For<sup>4</sup> whether is easier to say, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*; or to say, *Arise, and walk*?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive<sup>5</sup> sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) *Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.*

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

<sup>4</sup> Mark ii. 9—12. Luke v. 23—25. <sup>5</sup> Mic. vii. 18. Luke xlii. 11—13.

might be willing to direct the minds of the spectators to this fact; and by pointing them to a manifest instance of the effect of sin, to lead them to hate and forsake it. Diseases are sometimes the direct judgment of God for sin. 2 Sam. xxiv. 10—14. 1 Cor. v. 3—5; xi. 30. This truth, also, Christ might have been desirous of impressing on the people.

3. *This man blasphemeth.* The word *blaspheme* originally means to speak evil of any one, to injure by words, to blame unjustly. When applied to God, it means to speak of him unjustly, to ascribe to him acts and attributes which he does not possess, or to speak impiously or profanely. It also means to say or do any thing by which his name or honour is insulted, or which conveys an impression unfavourable to God. It means, also, to attempt to do or say a thing which belongs to him alone, or which he only can do. This is its meaning here. Christ was charged with saying a thing in his own name, or attempting to do a thing which properly belonged to God; thus assuming the place of God, and doing him injury, as the Scribes supposed, by an invasion of his prerogatives. "None," said they, see Mark and Luke, "can forgive sins but God only." In this they reasoned correctly. See Isa. xliii. 25; xlv. 22. None of the prophets had this power; and by saying that he forgave sins, Jesus was understood to affirm that he was divine; and as he proved this by working a miracle expressly to confirm the claim, it follows that he is divine, or equal with the Father.

4. *Jesus knowing their thoughts.* Mark says, "Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned." The power of search-

groom shall be taken from them, and then shall<sup>1</sup> they fast

16 No man putteth a piece of<sup>2</sup> new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxii. 12. <sup>2</sup> Or, raw, or, unwrought cloth.

children of the bride-chamber, that is, the bride-men, or men who had the special care of the bridal chamber, and who were therefore his special friends, do not think of fasting while he is with them. With them it is a time of festivity and rejoicing, and mourning would not be appropriate. When he is removed, or taken away, then their festivity will be ended, and then will be the proper time of sorrow. So, says he, John, your friend and teacher, is in captivity. With you it is a time of deep grief, and it is fit that you should fast. I am with my disciples. It is with them a time of joy. It is not fit that they should use the tokens of grief, and fast now. When I am taken away, it will then be proper that they should fast. For an account of the ceremonies of an eastern marriage, see Note, Matt. xxv. 1—13.

16. No man putteth a piece of new cloth, &c. A second illustration was drawn from a well-known fact, showing also that there was a propriety or fitness of things. None of you, says he, in mending an old garment, would take a piece of entire new cloth. There would be a waste in it. An old piece, or a piece like the garment, would be better. The word here translated *new*, in the original means rude, undressed, or not fulled or cleansed by the cloth-dresser. In this state, if applied to an old garment, and if wet, it would contract and draw off a part of the garment to which it was attached, and thus make the rent worse than it was. So, says he, my new doctrines do not match with the old rites of the Pharisees. There is a fitness of things. Their doctrines required much fasting. In my system it would be incongruous; and if my new doctrines were to be attached to their old ones, it would only make the matter worse.

17. Neither do men put new wine, &c. The third illustration was taken from wine

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else<sup>3</sup> the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 ¶ While<sup>4</sup> he spake these

<sup>3</sup> Job. xxxii. 18. <sup>4</sup> Mark v. 22. Luke viii. 41.

put into bottles. Bottles, in eastern nations, were made anciently, and are still made, of skins of beasts. Generally the skin from a sheep or a goat was taken entire, and, properly prepared, was filled with wine or water. They are still used, because, in crossing deserts of sand, there are no conveyances but camels, or other beasts of burden. It would be difficult for them to carry glass-bottles or kegs on them. They, therefore, fill two skins, and fasten them together, and lay them across the back of a camel, and thus carry wine or water to a great distance. They were of course of different sizes, as the skins of kids, goats, or oxen might be used. Bruce describes particularly a bottle which he saw in Arabia, made in this manner, of an ox-skin, which would hold sixty gallons, and two of which were a load for a camel. By long usage, such bottles of course become tender, and are easily ruptured. New wine, put into them, would ferment, and swell and burst them open. New skins or bottles would yield to the fermenting wine, and be strong enough to hold it from bursting. So, says Christ, there is a fitness or propriety of things. It is not fit that my doctrine should be attached to, or connected with, the old and corrupt doctrines of the Pharisees. New things should be put together, and made to match.

This account of eastern bottles may illustrate the following passages in the Bible. The Gibeonites took "wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up." Josh. ix. 4. "My belly is ready to burst, like new bottles." Job xxxii. 19. "I am become like a bottle in the smoke," Psa. cxix. 83; i. e. like a bottle of skin hung up in a tent filled with smoke.

18—26. The account contained in these verses is also recorded, with some additional circumstances, in Mark v. 22—43, and Luke viii. 41—56.

18. There came a certain ruler.

things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.<sup>1</sup>

19 And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his disciples.

20 ¶ And,<sup>2</sup> behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind

<sup>1</sup> John xi. 22, 23.    <sup>2</sup> Mark v. 25. Luke viii. 41.

Mark and Luke say that his name was Jairus, and that he was a ruler of the synagogue; that is, one of the elders to whom was committed the care of the synagogue. See Note, Matt. iv. 23. ¶ *And worshipped him.* That is, fell down before him, or expressed his respect for him by a token of profound regard. See Note, Matt. ii. 2. ¶ *My daughter is even now dead.* Luke says that this was his only daughter, and that she was twelve years of age. Mark and Luke say that she was at the point of death, and that information of her actual death was brought to him by one who was sent by the ruler of the synagogue, while Jesus was going. Matthew combined the two facts, and stated the representation which was made to Jesus, without stopping particularly to exhibit the manner in which it was done. In a summary way he says that the ruler communicated the information. Luke and Mark, dwelling more particularly on the circumstances, state at length the way in which it was done; that is, by himself stating, in a hurry, that she was about to die, or dying, and then in a few moments sending word that she was dead. The Greek word, rendered *is even now dead*, does not of necessity mean, as our translation would express, that she had actually expired, but only that she was dying or about to die. Compare Luke xiv. 21. It is likely that a father, in these circumstances, would use a word so nearly expressing actual death as would be consistent with the fact that she was alive. The passage may be expressed thus: My daughter was so sick that she must be, by this time, dead. ¶ *Come and lay thy hand upon her.* It was customary

him, and touched the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment,<sup>3</sup> I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about; and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix. 12.    <sup>4</sup> Luke vii. 50; xvii. 19; xviii. 42. Acts xiv. 9.    <sup>5</sup> John iv. 53.

for the Jewish prophets, in conferring favours, to lay their hand on the person benefited. Jesus had probably done so also, and the ruler had probably witnessed the fact.

20. *And behold a woman, &c.* This disease was by the Jews reckoned unclean, Lev. xv. 25, and she was unwilling to make personal application to Jesus, or even to touch his person. The disease was regarded as incurable. She had expended all her property, and grew worse. Mark v. 26. ¶ *Touched the hem of his garment.* This garment was probably the square garment which was thrown over the shoulders. Note, Matt. v. 40. This was surrounded by a border, or fringe; and this fringe, or the loose threads hanging down, is what is meant by the *hem*. The Jews were commanded to wear this in order to distinguish them from other nations. See Num. xv. 38, 39; Deut. xxii. 12.

Mark says that *the woman, fearing and trembling*, came and told him all the truth. Perhaps she feared that, from the impure nature of her disease, he would be offended that she touched him. ¶ *Be of good comfort.* Jesus silenced her fears, commended her faith, and sent her away in peace. He used an endearing appellation, calling her daughter, a word of tenderness and affection, and dismissed her who had been twelve long and tedious years labouring under a weakening and offensive disease, now in an instant made whole. Her faith, her strong confidence in Jesus, had been the means of her restoration. It was the power of Jesus that cured her; but that power would not have been exerted but in connexion with faith. So in the salvation of a



23 ¶ And<sup>1</sup> when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the<sup>2</sup> minstrels and the people making a noise,

<sup>1</sup> Mark v. 38. Luke viii. 51. <sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

sinner. No one is saved who does not believe; but faith is the instrument, and not the power, that saves.

23. *And when Jesus came in, &c.* Jesus admitted only three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John the brother of James, and the father and mother of the damsel, to go in with him where the corpse lay. Mark v. 37—40. It was important that there should be witnesses of the miracle, and he chose a sufficient number. Five witnesses were enough to establish the fact. The witnesses were impartial. The fact that she was dead was established beyond a doubt. Of this the mourners, the parents, the messengers, the people were satisfied. If she was presented to the people alive, the proof of the miracle was complete. The presence of more than the five witnesses would have made the scene tumultuous, and have been less satisfactory evidence of the fact of the restoration of the child. Five sober witnesses are always better than the confused voices of a rabble. These were the same disciples that were with him in the mount of transfiguration and garden of Gethsemane. Mark ix. 2, and xiv. 33. 2 Pet. i. 17, 18. ¶ *He saw the minstrels and people making a noise.* Minstrels are persons who play on instruments of music. The people of the east used to bewail the dead by cutting the flesh, tearing the hair, and crying bitterly. See Jer. ix. 17; xvi. 6, 7. Ezek. xxiv. 17. The expressions of grief at the death of a friend, in eastern countries, are extreme. As soon as a person dies, all the females in the family set up a loud and doleful cry. They continue it as long as they can without taking breath, and the shriek of wailing dies away in a low sob. Nor do the relatives satisfy themselves with these expressions of violent grief. They hire persons of both sexes, whose employment it is to mourn for the dead in the like frantic manner. See Jer. ix. 20. Am. v. 16. They sing the virtues of the deceased, recount his *acts, dwell on his beauty, strength, or*

24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead,<sup>3</sup> but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kin. xvii. 18—24. Acts ix. 40, 41; xx. 10.

learning; on the comforts of his family and home, and in doleful strains ask him why he left his family and friends. To all this they add soft and melancholy music. They employ minstrels to aid their grief, and increase the expression of their sorrow. This violent grief continues, commonly, eight days. In the case of a king, or other very distinguished personage, it is prolonged through an entire month. This grief does not cease at the house; it is exhibited in the procession to the grave; and the air is rent with the wailings of real and of hired mourners.

The Jews were forbidden to tear their hair and cut their flesh. See Lev. xix. 28. Deut. xiv. 1. They showed their grief by howling, by music, by concealing the chin with their garment, by rending the outer garment, by refusing to wash or anoint themselves, or to converse with people, by scattering ashes or dust in the air, or by lying down in them. 2 Sam. i. 2—4; xiv. 2; xv. 30. Job i. 20; ii. 12. Mark xiv. 63. The expressions of grief, therefore, mentioned on this occasion, though excessive and foolish, were yet strictly in accordance with eastern customs.

24. *The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.* It cannot be supposed that our Lord means literally to say that the child was not dead. Every possible evidence of her death had been given, and he acted on that himself, and conveyed to the people the idea that he raised her from the dead. He meant to speak in opposition to their opinions. It is not unlikely that Jairus and the people favoured the opinions of the Sadducees, and that they understood by her being dead that she had ceased to be, and that she would never be raised up again. In opposition to this he used the expression *she sleepeth*; affirming mildly both that the body was dead, and implying that her spirit still lived, and that she would be raised up again. A similar mode of speaking is seen in John xi. 11: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." The sacred writers, who hold the doctrine

25 But when the people were forth,<sup>1</sup> he went in, and took her the hand, and the maid arose.

26 And<sup>2</sup> the fame hereof went oad into all that land.

27 ¶ And when Jesus departed nce, two blind men followed a, crying, and saying, *Thou n of David,*<sup>3</sup> have mercy on us.

28 And when he was come into house, the blind men came to a; and Jesus saith unto them, lieve ye that I am able to do this? ey said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes, ing. According to your faith be unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened: d Jesus straitly charged them, ing. See that no man know<sup>4</sup> it.

<sup>2</sup> Kln. iv. 32—37. <sup>3</sup> Or, *this fame*. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xv. xx. 30, 31. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xii. 16. Isa. xlii. 2; 13.

the resurrection, often spoke of the d as sleeping. Acts vii. 60. 1 Cor. 6, 18. 1 Thess. iv. 13—15. 2 Pet. 4. The meaning of this passage, then, the maid has not ceased to exist; but ugh her body is dead, yet her spirit a, and she sleeps in the hope of the urrection. ¶ *Laughed him to scorn.* rided him, ridiculed him.

25. *He went in.* With the father, and ther, and three disciples. Mark v. —40. ¶ *The maid arose.* She return- to life. There could be no deception e. Parents could not be imposed on uch a case. Nor could such a multi- be deceived. The power of Jesus undoubtedly shown to be sufficient to e the dead. If he can restore the ly to life, he can also restore the soul. word from him can raise the soul to mortal life, so that it shall never see th.

27. *Son of David.* By the *Son of rid* the Jews meant the Messiah. He s the Son or descendant of David by r of eminence. Isa. ix. 7. Matt. i. 1. ke i. 32. Rev. xxii. 16.

28. *And when he was come into the ae.* He went into a house probably to

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 ¶ As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man<sup>5</sup> possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake:<sup>6</sup> and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, He<sup>7</sup> casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

35 And<sup>8</sup> Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36 ¶ But when he saw the multi-

<sup>5</sup> Ch. xli. 22. Luke xi. 14. <sup>6</sup> Isa. xxxv. 6. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xii. 24. Mark iii. 22. Luke xi. 15. <sup>8</sup> Ch. iv. 23.

avoid the tumult and publicity of the street. He sought privacy, and was unwilling to make any commotion.

34. *Prince of the devils.* That is, Beelzebub. See Note, Matt. xii. 24.

35. *The gospel of the kingdom.* That is, the good news of the reign of God, or the good news of the advent and reign of the Messiah. Matt. iii. 2.

36. *Because they fainted.* The word used here refers to the weariness and fatigue which results from labour and being burdened. He saw the people burdened with the rites of religion and the doctrines of the Pharisees; sinking down under their ignorance and traditions, and neglected by those who ought to have been enlightened teachers; scattered and driven out without care and attention. With great beauty he compares them to sheep, wandering without a shepherd. Judea was a land of flocks and herds. The faithful shepherd, by day and night, was with his flock. He defended them, led them to green pastures, and beside the still waters. Without his care they would stray away. They were in danger of wild beasts. They panting in the summer sun, and knew not

tudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they <sup>1</sup> fainted, and wore scattered abroad, as sheep <sup>2</sup> having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his dis-

<sup>1</sup> Or, were tired, and lay down. <sup>2</sup> Num. xxvii. 17. 1 Kin. xxii. 17. Ezek. xxxiv. 5. Zec. x. 2.

where were the cooling shade and stream. So, said he, is it with this people. No wonder that the compassionate Redeemer was moved with pity!

37. *The harvest truly is plenteous, &c.* Another beautiful image. A waving field of golden grain invites many reapers, and demands haste. By the *harvest*, here, he meant that the multitude of people that flocked to his ministry was great. The people expected the Messiah. They were prepared to receive the gospel. But the labourers were few. Few were engaged in instructing the multitude. He directed them, therefore, to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send forth reapers. God is the proprietor of the great harvest of the world, and he only can send men to gather it in.

## REMARKS.

I. We are presented with an instance of proper perseverance in coming to Christ, ver. 1, 2. Nothing was suffered to prevent the purpose of presenting the helpless paralytic to the Saviour. So the poor helpless sinner should come. No obstacle should prevent him. He should lay himself at his feet, and feel that Jesus holds over him the power of life and death, and that no other being can save.

II. Jesus has the power to forgive sins, ver. 6. He claimed it, and worked a miracle to prove it. If he had it then, he has it still. To him, then, the lost sinner may come, with the assurance that as he freely exerted that power in this instance, so he is ever the same, and will do it now.

III. Jesus Christ is divine. Nothing could prove it more clearly than the power to pardon rebels. God only can pronounce what shall be done with transgressors of his law. Isa. xliii. 25. He that claims this right must be either an impostor or God. But no impostor ever yet worked a miracle. Jesus was therefore divine. He can save to the uttermost *all that come to God* through him.

IV. We see here the proper rule to be

ciples, *The harvest* <sup>3</sup> truly is plenteous, but the labourers *are* few;

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth <sup>4</sup> labourers into his harvest.

<sup>3</sup> Luke x. 2. John iv. 35. <sup>4</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 11—15. Mic. v. 7. Acts viii. 4. 1 Cor. xii. 28.

observed in mingling with the wicked. Ver. 10—13. It should not be of choice, or for pleasure. We should not enter into their follies or vices. We should not seek enjoyment in their society. We should mingle with them simply to transact necessary business, and to do them good, and no further. Psa. i. 1.

V. In the case of the ruler and the woman that was diseased we have a strong instance of the nature of faith. They came not doubting his power—fully assured that he was able to heal. So all genuine believers come to him. They doubt not his power or willingness to save them. Poor, and lost, and ruined by sin, and in danger of eternal death, they come. His heart is open. He puts forth his power, and the soul is healed, and the sin and danger gone.

VI. The young must die, and may die in early life. ver. 18. Very short graves are in every burying-ground. Thousands and millions, not more than twelve years of age, have died. Thousands and millions, not more than twelve years of age, are yet to die. Many of these may be taken from Sunday schools. Their classes, their teachers, their parents, sisters, and brothers—must be left, and the child be carried to the grave. Many children of that age, that have been in Sunday schools, have died happy. They loved the Saviour, and they were ready to go. Jesus was near to them when they died, and they are now in heaven. Of every child we may ask, are you ready also to go when God shall call you? Do you love the Lord Jesus so as to be willing to leave all your friends here, and go to him?

VII. Jesus can raise up the dead, and he will raise up all that love him. Ver. 25. Many little children will be raised up to meet him in the last great day. He shall come in the clouds. The angel shall sound a trumpet, and all the dead shall hear. All shall be raised up and go to meet him. All that loved him here will go to heaven. All that were wicked, and

## CHAPTER X.

*The twelve sent out, 1—4. Charge to the twelve, 5—15. Encouragement to the twelve, 16—39. Receiving the preaching of the twelve, and its blessings, 40—42.*

**A**ND when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he<sup>1</sup> gave them power <sup>2</sup>against unclean

<sup>1</sup> Mark iii. 13, 14; vi. 7—11. Luke ix. 1—6.  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *over*.

did not love him here, will go to everlasting suffering.

VII. We see the duty of praying for the conversion of the world. Ver. 37, 38. The harvest is as plenteous as it was in the time of Christ. More than six hundred millions are still without the gospel. And there are not yet many labourers to go into the harvest. The world is full of wickedness, and God only can qualify those who shall go and preach the gospel to the dark nations of the earth. Without ceasing, we ought to entreat of God to pity the nations, and to send faithful men, who shall tell them of a dying Saviour.

## CHAPTER X.

1. *And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, &c.* This account of sending the apostles forth is recorded also in Mark vi. 7—11, and Luke ix. 1—6. Mark says that he sent them out two and two. This was a kind arrangement, that each one might have a companion; and that they might visit more places, and accomplish more labour, than if they were all together. These twelve were the original number of apostles. The word apostle means one that is sent, and was given to the disciples because they were sent forth to preach the gospel. They were ambassadors of Christ. To this number Matthias was afterwards added, to supply the place of Judas. Acts i. 26. And Paul was specially called to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Rom. i. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 2, 9. Gal. i. 1. So that there were in all fourteen apostles.

In selecting twelve at first, it is probable that he was somewhat guided by the number of the tribes of Israel. Twelve was, with them, a well-known number, and it was natural that he should select one for every tribe. *Their office was clearly made known. They were to heal*

spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names<sup>3</sup> of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother;

<sup>3</sup> Luke vi. 12.

the sick, raise the dead, preach the gospel, &c. They were to be with him, receive his instructions, learn the nature of his religion, be witnesses of his resurrection, and bear his gospel around the globe. The number twelve was the best for these purposes that could be selected. It was sufficiently large to answer the purpose of testimony; and it was so small as not to be disorderly, or easily divided into parties or factions. They were not learned men, and could not be supposed to spread their religion by art, or talents. They were not men of wealth, and could not bribe men to follow them. They were not men of rank and office, and could not compel men to believe. They were just such men as are always found the best witnesses in courts of justice, plain men, of good sense, of fair character, of great honesty, and with favourable opportunities of ascertaining the facts to which they bore witness. Such men everybody believes, and especially when they are willing to lay down their lives to prove their sincerity.

It was important that he should choose them early in his ministry, that they might be fully acquainted with him; might treasure up his instructions, and observe his manner of life and his person, that by having been long acquainted with him they might be able to testify to his identity, and be competent witnesses of his resurrection. No witnesses were ever so well qualified to give testimony as they; and none ever gave so much evidence of their sincerity as they did. See Acts i. 21, 22.

2. The account which follows is more fully given in Mark iii. 13—18, and Luke vi. 12—19. Both of those evangelists have recorded the circumstances of their appointment. They agree in saying it was done on a mountain; and, according

3 Philip, and Bartholomew ; Thomas, and Matthew the publican ; James *the son* of Alphæus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddæus :

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them, saying, Go

to Luke, it was done before the sermon on the mount was delivered, perhaps on the same mountain, near Capernaum. Luke adds that the night previous had been spent in prayer to God. See Note on Luke vi. 12. ¶ *Simon, who is called Peter.* Peter means a rock. He was also called Cephas. John i. 42. 1 Cor. i. 12 ; iii. 22, xv. 5. Gal. ii. 9. This was a Syro-Chaldaic word, signifying the same as Peter. This name was given, probably in reference to the resoluteness and firmness, which he was to exhibit in preaching the gospel. Before the Saviour's death he was rash, impetuous, and unstable. Afterwards, as all history affirms, he was firm, zealous, steadfast, and immovable. He was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, thinking it too great an honour to die as his Master did.\* See Note, John xxi. 18. ¶ *James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother.* This James was slain by Herod in a persecution. Acts xii. 2. The other James, the son of Alphæus, was stationed at Jerusalem, and was the author of the epistle that bears his name. See Acts xv. 13. Gal. i. 19 ; ii. 9. A James is mentioned, Gal. i. 19, as the Lord's brother. It has not been easy to ascertain why he was thus called. He is here called the son of Alphæus, that is, of Cleophas. John xix. 25. Alphæus and Cleophas were but different ways of writing and pronouncing the same name. This Mary, called the mother of James and Joseph, is called the wife of Cleophas. John xix. 25. ¶ *Lebbeus, called Thaddæus.* These two words have the same signification in Hebrew. Luke calls him Judas, by a slight change from the name Thaddæus. Such changes are common in all writings.

4. *Simon the Canaanite.* Luke calls him Simon Zelotes, the zealous. It is probable that he was one of a small sect of the Jews called Zealots, on account of

peculiar zeal in religion. His native place was probably Cana. Afterward he might with propriety be called by either title. ¶ *Judas Iscariot.* It is probable this name was given to him to designate his native place. Carioth was a small town in the tribe of Judah.

5. *Into the way of the Gentiles.* This is, among the Gentiles, or nowhere but among the Jews. The full time of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles was not come. It was proper that it should be first preached to the Jews, the ancient covenant people of God, and the people among whom the Messiah was born. He afterwards gave them a charge to go into all the world. Matt. xxviii. 19. ¶ *As into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.* The Samaritans occupied the country formerly belonging to the tribe of Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasse. This region was situated between Jerusalem and Galilee ; so that in passing from the one to the other, it was a direct course to pass through Samaria. The capital of the country was Samaria, formerly a large and splendid city. It was situated about fifteen miles to the north west of the city of Shechem or Sychar see Notes on John iv. 5 ; and about forty miles to the north of Jerusalem. For description of this city, see my Notes on Isaiah, xxviii. 1. Sychar or Shechem was also a city in the limits of Samaria.

This people was formerly composed of a few of the ten tribes, and a mixture of foreigners. When the ten tribes were carried away into captivity to Babylon the king of Assyria sent people from Cutha, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim to inhabit their country. 2 Kin. xvii. 24—10. These people at first worshipped the idols of their own nation. But being troubled with lions, which had increased greatly while the country remained uninhabited, they supposed it was because they had not honoured the God of the country. A Jewish priest was therefore sent to them from Babylon, to instruct them in the Jewish religion. They were instructed partially from the

\* This statement, that Peter was crucified at Rome, has been called in question. See Dr. Campbell's *Lectures on Eccles. Hist.*, Lecture XII. ; Alexander, *Winter*, &c.—Editor.

not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans<sup>1</sup> enter ye not:

6 But go<sup>2</sup> rather to the lost sheep<sup>3</sup> of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, 4 The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. xvii. 24. John iv. 5, 9, 20. <sup>2</sup> Acts xiii. 46. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxlix. 176. Isa. liii. 6. Jer. l. 6, 17. Ezek. xxxiv. 5, 6, 8. 1 Pet. ii. 25. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 2; iv. 17. Luke ix. 2; x. 9.

books of Moses; but still retained many of their old rites and idolatrous customs, and embraced a religion made up of Judaism and idolatry. 2 Kin. xvii. 26—28.

The grounds of difference between the two nations were the following:—

I The Jews, after their return from Babylon, set about rebuilding their temple. The Samaritans offered to aid them. The Jews, however, perceiving that it was not from a love of true religion, but that they might obtain a part of the favours granted to the Jews by Cyrus, rejected their offer. The consequence was, that a state of long and bitter animosity arose between them and the Jews.

II. While Nehemiah was engaged in building the walls of Jerusalem, the Samaritans used every art to thwart him in his undertaking. Neh. vi. 1—14.

III. The Samaritans at length obtained leave of the Persian monarch to build a temple for themselves. This was erected on mount Gerizim, and they strenuously contended that that was the place designated by Moses as the place where the nation should worship. Sanballat, the leader of the Samaritans, constituted his son-in-law, Manasses, high priest. The religion of the Samaritans thus became perpetuated, and an irreconcilable hatred arose between them and the Jews. See Note on John iv. 20.

IV. Afterwards Samaria became a place of resort for all the outlaws of Judea. They received willingly all the Jewish criminals, and refugees from justice. The violators of the Jewish laws, and those who had been excommunicated, betook themselves for safety to Samaria, and greatly increased their num-

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: 5 freely ye have received,

9 6 Provide 7 neither gold; nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

<sup>5</sup> 2 Kin. v. 15, 16, 20—27. Acts iii. 6; viii. 18, 20; xx. 33—35. <sup>6</sup> Or, *get*. <sup>7</sup> Mark vi. 8. Luke ix. 3; x. 4; xxii. 35. 1 Cor. ix. 7—14.

bers and the hatred which subsisted between the two nations.

V. The Samaritans received only the five books of Moses, and rejected the writings of the prophets, and all the Jewish traditions. From these causes arose an irreconcilable difference between them, so that the Jews regarded them as the worst of the human race, John viii. 48, and had no dealings with them. John iv. 9. Our Saviour, however, preached the gospel to them afterwards, John iv. 6—26, and the apostles imitated his example. Acts viii. 25. The gospel was, however, first preached to the Jews.

6. *But go rather to the lost sheep, &c.* That is, to the Jews. He regarded them as wandering and lost, like sheep straying without a shepherd. They had been the chosen people of God; they had long looked for the Messiah; and it was proper that the gospel should be first offered to them.

7. *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.* Or, more literally, the reign of heaven, or of God, draws near. See Note, Matt. iii. 2.

8. *Freely ye have received, freely give.* That is, they were not to sell their favours of healing, preaching, &c. They were not to make a money-making business of it, to bargain specifically to heal for so much, and to cast out devils for so much. This, however, neither then nor afterwards, precluded them from receiving a competent support. See Luke x. 7. 1 Cor. ix. 8—14. 1 Tim. v. 18.

9—15. See also Mark vi. 8—11, and Luke ix. 3—5. In both these places the substance of this account is given, though not so particularly as in Matthew. The general subject is, the instructions given to the apostles.

9. *Nor brass.* This prohibition of gold, silver, and brass, is designed to pre-

10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet<sup>1</sup> staves: for<sup>2</sup> the workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or

<sup>1</sup> A staff. <sup>2</sup> Luke x. 7.

vent their preparing money for their journey. Pieces of money of small value were made of brass. ¶ *In your purses.* Literally in your girdles. See Note, Matt. v. 38—41. A girdle or sash was an indispensable part of the dress. This girdle was made hollow, and answered the purpose of a purse. It was convenient, easily borne, and safe.

10. *Neither scrip.* That is, knapsack. It was made of skin or coarse cloth, to carry provisions in. It was commonly hung around the neck. As they were to be provided for on their way, it was unnecessary to provide a store of provisions. ¶ *Neither two coats.* See Note, Matt. v. 40. ¶ *Neither shoes.* The original is the word commonly rendered sandals. See Note, Matt. iii. 11.

Mark says, in recording this discourse, "but be shod with sandals." Between this and Matthew there is an apparent contradiction. But there is really no difference. According to Matthew, Jesus does not forbid their wearing the sandals, which they probably had on, but only forbids their supplying themselves with more, or with superfluous ones. Instead of making provision for their feet when their present shoes were worn out, they were to trust to Providence to be supplied, and go as they were. And the meaning of the two evangelists may be thus expressed: "Do not procure anything more for your journey than you have on. Go as you are, shod with sandals, without making any preparation." ¶ *Nor yet staves.* In the margin, in all the ancient versions, and in the common Greek text, it is in the singular number, nor yet a staff. But Mark says that they might have a staff: "Jesus commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only." To many this would appear to be a contradiction. Yet the spirit of the instruction, the main thing that the writer aims at, is the same. That was, that they were to go just as they were, to trust to Providence, and

town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 17; iii. 8.

not to spend any time in making preparation for their journey. Some of them, probably, when he addressed them had staves, and some had not. To those who had he did not say that they should throw them away, as the instructions he was giving might seem to require, but suffered them to take them. (Mark.) To those who had not, he said they should not spend time in procuring them; (Matthew,) but all go just as they were. ¶ *The workman is worthy of his meat.* This implies that they were to expect proper supply for their wants from those who were benefited. They were not to make bargain and sale of the power of working miracles, but they were to expect competent support from preaching the gospel; and that not merely as a gift, but because they were worthy of it, and had a right to it.

11. *Who in it is worthy.* That is, who in it sustains a fair character will be able and disposed to show you hospitality, and will treat you kindly. This shows that they were not suddenly and needlessly to throw themselves in the way of insult or want. ¶ *And there abide.* There remain; as Luke adds, "Go not from house to house." They were to content themselves with one house; not to wander about in the manner of vagrants and mendicants; not to appear to be men of idleness, and fond of change; not to seem dissatisfied with the hospitality of the people; but to show that they had regular, important business; to show that they valued their time, were disposed to give themselves to labour, prayer, and meditation; and to be intent only on the business for which he had sent them. If ministers of the gospel are useful, it will be by not spending their time in idle chit-chat, and wandering about as if they had nothing to do; but in an honest and laborious improvement of every moment in study, prayer, preaching, and religious visiting their people.

12. *And when you come into a house,*

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it : but if it be not worthy, let your peace return<sup>1</sup> to you.

14 And<sup>2</sup> whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxv. 13. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 40, 41. John xiii. 20. 1 Thes. iv. 8.

*what it.* The word *house*, here, evidently means family, as it does in the following verse. See also Matt. xii. 25, and John iv. 53 : "And himself believed and his whole house." The apostles were directed to salute the family, to show them the customary tokens of respect, and to treat them with civility. Religion never requires or permits its friends to outrage the common rules of social intercourse. It demands of them to exhibit to all the customary and proper tokens of respect, according to their age and station. Phil. iv. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 2—25 ; iii. 8—11. For the mode of salutation, see Note, Luke x. 4, 5.

15. *If the house be worthy.* That is, if the family be worthy, or be willing to receive you as my disciples. ¶ *Let your peace come upon it.* That is, let the ease or happiness which you seek, or for which you pray, in saluting it, see Luke . 5, come upon it ; or seek their peace and happiness by prayer, instruction, by remaining with them, and imparting to them the blessings of the gospel. ¶ *But if it be not worthy, &c.* If the family be unwilling to receive you ; if they show themselves unfriendly to you and your message ; *let your peace return to you.* This is a Hebrew mode of saying that your peace shall not come upon it. Ps. xxxv. 13. It is a mode of speaking derived from bestowing a gift. If people are willing to receive it, they derived benefit from it ; if not, then of course the present came back, or remained in the hand of the giver. So Christ figuratively speaks of the peace which their hour would confer. If received kindly and hospitably by the people, they would confer on them most valuable blessings. If rejected and persecuted, the blessings which they sought for others would come upon themselves. They would reap the benefit of being cast out and persecuted as their Master's sake. Matt. v. 10.

or city, shake<sup>3</sup> off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, It<sup>4</sup> shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

16 ¶ Behold, I send you forth

<sup>3</sup> Neh. v. 13. Acts xiii. 51 ; xviii. 6. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xi. 22, 24.

14. *Shake off the dust of your feet.* The Jews taught uniformly that the dust of the Gentiles was impure, and was to be shaken off. To shake off the dust from the feet, therefore, was a significant act, denoting that they regarded them as impure, profane, and heathenish, and unworthy of their instruction, and that they declined all further connexion with them. It is recorded that this was actually done by some of the apostles. See Acts xiii. 51 ; xviii. 6.

15. *It shall be more tolerable for Sodom, &c.* The cities here mentioned, together with Admah and Zeboim, were destroyed by fire and brimstone, or by a volcanic eruption, on account of their great wickedness. They occupied the place afterwards covered by the Dead Sea, bounding Palestine on the south-east. Gen. xix. 24, 25. Christ said that their punishment will be more tolerable—that is, more easily borne—than that of the people who reject his gospel. The reason is, that they were not favoured with so much light and instruction. See Matt. xi. 23, 24. Luke xii. 47, 48. Sodom and Gomorrah are often referred to as signal instances of divine vengeance, and as sure proofs that the wicked shall not go unpunished. See 2 Pet. ii. 6. Jude 7.

16. *As sheep in the midst of wolves.* That is, I send you inoffensive and harmless, into a cold, unfriendly, and cruel world. Your innocence will not be a protection. ¶ *Be wise as serpents, &c.* Serpents have always been an emblem of wisdom and cunning. Gen. iii. 1. The Egyptians used the serpent in their hieroglyphics as a symbol of wisdom. Probably the thing in which Christ directed his followers here to imitate the serpent, was in its caution in avoiding danger. No animal equals the serpent in the rapidity and skill which it evinces in escaping danger. So said Christ to his disciples, You need caution and wisdom,



as sheep in the midst of wolves : be ye therefore <sup>1</sup>wise as serpents, and <sup>2</sup>harmless<sup>3</sup> as doves.

17 But beware<sup>4</sup> of men : for<sup>5</sup> they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge<sup>6</sup> you in their synagogues ;

18 And<sup>7</sup> ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xvi. 19. Ephes. v. 15. <sup>2</sup> Or, simple.  
<sup>3</sup> Phil. ii. 15. <sup>4</sup> Phil. iii. 2. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xxiv. 9.  
Mark xiii. 9. <sup>6</sup> Acts v. 40. <sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 24.  
<sup>8</sup> Acts xxiv. ; xxv.

in the midst of a world that will seek your lives. He directs them also to be harmless, not to provoke danger, not to do injury, and thus make their fellow men justly enraged against them. Doves are, and always have been, a striking emblem of innocence. Most men would destroy a serpent, be it ever so harmless ; yet few are so hard-hearted as to kill a dove.

17. *But beware of men.* That is, be on your guard against men who are like wolves. Ver. 16. Do not run unnecessarily into danger. Use suitable prudence and caution, and do not unnecessarily endanger your lives. ¶ *Councils.* The word here used, commonly signifies the great council of the nation, the Sanhedrim. See Note, Matt. v. 22. Here it seems to refer to any judicial tribunal, of which there were some in every village. ¶ *They will scourge you in their synagogues.* Scourging, or whipping, is often mentioned in the New Testament as a punishment. The law of Moses directed that the number of stripes should not exceed forty, but might be any number less, at the discretion of the judge. Deut. xxv. 2, 3. The person who was sentenced to scourging was formerly laid upon the ground, and the blows inflicted on his back in the presence of the judge. Afterwards, the criminal was tied to a low post. Scourging is still practised in the east ; but the blows are commonly inflicted on the soles of the feet. It is called the *bastinado*.

The instrument formerly used was a rod. Afterwards they employed thongs or lashes attached to the rod. To make the blows severe and more painful, they sometimes fastened sharp points of iron, or pieces of lead, in the thongs. These

sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 But<sup>8</sup> when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak : for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the<sup>9</sup> Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

<sup>8</sup> Mark xiii. 11. Luke xii. 11 ; xxi. 14, 15.  
<sup>9</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. Acts iv. 8 ; vi. 10.

were called scorpions. 1 Kin. xii. 11. The law was express that the number of stripes should not exceed forty. The Jews, to secure the greater accuracy in counting, used a scourge with three lashes, which inflicted three stripes at once. With this the criminal was struck thirteen times, making the number of blows thirty-nine. Paul was five times scourged in this way. See 2 Cor. xi. 24.

The Romans did not feel themselves bound by the law of the Jews in regard to the number of stripes, but inflicted them at pleasure. Thus our Saviour was scourged till he was so weak as not to be able to bear his cross. Scourging often took place in the synagogue. See Matt. xxiii. 34. Acts xxii. 19 ; xxvi. 11.

18. *And ye shall be brought, &c.* This prediction was completely and abundantly fulfilled. Acts v. 26 ; xii. 1—4 ; xxiii. 33 ; xxvi. 1, 28, 30. Peter is said to have been brought before Nero, John before Domitian, Roman emperors ; and others before Parthian, Scythian, and Indian kings. They were to stand there to bear a testimony against them ; or, as it might be rendered, to them. That is, they were to be witnesses to them of the great facts and doctrines of the christian religion ; and, if they rejected Christianity, they would be witnesses against them in the day of judgment. The fulfilment of this prophecy is a signal evidence that Christ possessed a knowledge of the future. Few things were more improbable when this was uttered, than that the fishermen of Galilee would stand before the illustrious and mighty monarchs of the east and the west.

19, 20. *Take no thought.* That is, be not anxious, or unduly solicitous. See

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death.

22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but <sup>1</sup>he

<sup>1</sup> Dan. xii. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 10.

Note, Matt. vi. 25. God would inspire them. This was a full promise that they should be inspired, and was a most reasonable consolation. Poor, and ignorant, and obscure fishermen would naturally be solicitous what they should say before the great men of the earth. Eastern people regarded kings as raised far above common mortals, as approaching to divinity. How consoling, then, the assurance that God would aid them, and speak within them.

21. *And the brother shall deliver up the brother, &c.* Were there no evidence that this had been done, it could scarcely be credible. The ties which bind brothers and sisters, and parents and children together, are so strong that it could scarcely be believed that division of sentiment on religious subjects would cause them to forget these tender relations. Yet history assures us that this has been done. If this be so, then how inexpressibly awful must be the malignity of the human heart by nature against religion! Nothing else but this dreadful opposition to God and his gospel, ever has induced, or ever can induce men to violate the most tender relations, and consign the best friends to torture, racks, and flames. It adds to the horrors of this, that those who were put to death in persecution, were tormented in the most awful modes that human ingenuity could devise. They were crucified, were thrown into boiling oil, were burnt at the stake, were roasted slowly over coals, were compelled to drink melted lead; were torn in pieces by beasts of prey, were covered with pitch, and burnt, to give light in the gardens of Nero. Yet dreadful as this prediction was, it was fulfilled; and incredible as it seems, parents and children, and husbands and wives, were found wicked enough to deliver up each other to these cruel modes of death, on account of their attachment to

that endureth to the end shall be saved.

23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee <sup>2</sup>ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not <sup>3</sup>have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 1. <sup>3</sup> Or, end, or, finish.

the gospel. Such is the opposition of the heart of man to the gospel! That hostility which will overcome the strong ties of natural affection, and which will be satisfied with nothing else to show its power, can be no slight opposition to the gospel of God.

22. *Ye shall be hated of all men.* That is, of all kinds of men. The human heart would be opposed to them, because it is opposed to Christ. "But he that endureth to the end, &c." That is, to the end of life, be it longer or shorter. He that bears all these unspeakable sufferings, and who does not shrink and apostatize, will give decisive evidence of attachment to me, and shall enter into heaven. See Rev. iii. 21, 22.

23. *When they persecute, &c.* They were not permitted to throw away their lives. Where they could preserve them without denying their Lord, they were to do it. Yet all the commands of Christ, as well as their conduct, show that they were rather to lay down their lives, than deny their Saviour. We are to preserve our lives by all proper means; but rather die than save ourselves by doing anything wrong. "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, &c." That is, in fleeing from persecutors, from one city to another, you shall not have gone to every city in Judea, till the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the Jewish economy. See Note on Matt. xxiv. 28-30. By the coming of the Son of man, that is, of Christ, is probably meant the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened about thirty years after this was spoken. The words are often used in this sense. See Matt. xxiv. 30. Mark xiii. 26. Luke xxi. 27, 32.

24, 25. *The disciple is not above his Master, &c.* That is, you must expect the same treatment which I have received. They have called me, your Master and

24 The <sup>1</sup>disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If <sup>2</sup>they have called the master of the house <sup>3</sup>Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household?

26 Fear them not therefore: for <sup>4</sup>there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

<sup>1</sup> Luke vi. 40. John xiii. 16; xv. 20. <sup>2</sup> John viii. 48. <sup>3</sup> *Beelzebub*. <sup>4</sup> Mark iv. 22. Luke xii. 2, 3. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

Teacher, Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. See Matt. xii. 24. Luke xi. 15. John viii. 48, and you must expect that they will call all of the family by the same name. Beelzebub, or Beelzeboul, was a god of the Ekronites. See 2 Kin. i. 2. The word literally means the god of flies, so called because the idol was supposed to protect from the numerous swarms of flies with which that country is supposed to have abounded. The word also signified, among the Jews, the god of filth, and was esteemed as the most low and offensive of all the idol gods. Hence the name was given to the leader, or prince of all the devils. Mark iii. 22. Luke xi. 15. By giving the name to Christ, they poured upon him the greatest possible abuse and contempt.

26. *Fear them not*, &c. He encouraged them by the assurance that God would protect them, and that their truth and innocence should yet be vindicated. It is probable that the declaration, *there is nothing covered*, &c. was a proverb among the Jews. By it our Saviour meant, that their innocence, their principles, and their integrity, though then the world might not acknowledge them, in due time would be revealed; or God would vindicate them, and the universe would do them justice. They were then to be willing to be unknown, despised, persecuted, for a time, with the assurance that their true characters should yet be understood, and their sufferings appreciated.

27. *What I say to you in darkness*,

27 What I tell you in darkness, *that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops.*

28 And <sup>5</sup>fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a <sup>6</sup>farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. viii. 12, 13; ii. 7, 12. 1 Pet. iii. 14. <sup>6</sup> In value, *halfpenny farthing*, a tenth part of the Roman penny. Ch. xviii. 28.

&c. That is, in secret, in private, in confidence. The private instructions which I give you while with me, do you proclaim publicly, on the house-top. The house-top, the flat roof, was a public conspicuous place. See 2 Sam. xvi. 22. See also Notes, Matt. ix. 2.

28. *Them which kill the body*. That is, men, who have no power to injure the soul, the immortal part. The body is a small matter, in comparison with the soul. Temporal death is a slight thing, compared with eternal death. He directs them, therefore, not to be alarmed at the prospect of temporal death; but to fear God, who can destroy both soul and body for ever. This passage proves that the bodies of the wicked will be raised up to be punished for ever. ¶ *In hell*. See Note on Matt. v. 22.

29—31. *Are not two sparrows*, &c. He encourages them not to fear by two striking considerations: first, that God took care of sparrows, the smallest and least valuable birds; and secondly, by the fact, that God numbered even the very hairs of the head. The argument is, if he takes care of birds of the least value; if he regards so small a thing as the hair of the head, and numbers it, he will certainly protect and provide for you. You need not, therefore, fear what man can do to you. ¶ *Sparrows*. Birds of very small kind and value, with a black throat, and brown temples. They were used for food among the Jews; and were an image of sorrow, solitude, and wretchedness. Psa. cii. 7, "I am a sparrow

30 But <sup>1</sup> the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him <sup>2</sup> will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But <sup>3</sup> whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: <sup>4</sup> I came not to send peace, but a sword.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxvii. 34. <sup>2</sup> Rev. iii. 5. <sup>3</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 12. <sup>4</sup> Luke xii. 49, 53.

lone upon the house-top." ¶ *Farthing.* See Note, Matt. v. 26. ¶ *Without your father.* That is, God your Father guides and directs its fall. Its fall is only with his permission, and where he chooses.

30. *The hairs—are numbered.* That each one has exercised the care and attention of God. He has fixed the number; and though of small importance, yet he does not think it beneath him to determine how few, or how many, they shall be. He will, therefore, take care of you.

32, 33. *Whosoever therefore shall confess me, &c.* The same word in the original is translated confess and profess. Rom. x. 10. 1 Tim. vi. 12, 13. 2 John

It means to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ, and our dependence on him for salvation, and our attachment to him, in every proper manner. This profession may be made, in uniting with a church; at the communion; in conversation; and in conduct. The scriptures mean, by a profession of religion, an exhibition of it in every circumstance of life, and before all men. It is not merely in one act that we must do it, but in every act. We must be ashamed of either of the person, the character, the doctrines, nor the requirements of Christ. If we are; if we deny him in these things before men; or are unwilling to express our attachment to him in every way possible, then it is right that he should disown all connexion with us,

35 For I am come to set a man at variance <sup>5</sup> against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36 And <sup>6</sup> a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

37 He <sup>7</sup> that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me.

<sup>5</sup> Mic. vii. 5, 6. <sup>6</sup> Psal. xli. 9. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xxii. 37. Deut. xxxiii. 9. Luke xiv. 26. John xxi. 15—17.

or deny us, before God. And he will do it.

34—36. *Think not that I am come, &c.* This is taken from Mic. vii. 6. Christ did not here mean to say that the object of his coming was to produce discord and contention; for he was the Prince of peace. Isa. ix. 6; xi. 6. Luke ii. 14. But he means to say that such would be one of the effects of his coming. One part of a family opposed to him would set themselves against that part which believed in him. The wickedness of men, and not the religion of the gospel, is the cause of this hostility. It is unnecessary to say that no prophecy has been more strikingly fulfilled; and it will continue to be fulfilled, till all unite in obeying his commandments. Then his religion will produce universal peace. ¶ *But a sword.* The sword is an instrument of death, and to send a sword, is the same as to produce hostility and war.

37. *He that loveth father or mother, &c.* The meaning of this is clear. Christ must be loved supremely, or he is not loved at all. If we are not willing to give up all earthly possessions, and forsake all earthly friends; and if we do not obey him rather than all others, we have no true attachment to him. ¶ *Is not worthy of me.* Is not fit to be regarded as a follower of me; or, is not a Christian.

38. *And he that taketh not his cross, &c.* When persons were condemned to

39 He<sup>1</sup> that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

40 ¶ He<sup>2</sup> that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41 He<sup>3</sup> that receiveth a prophet

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 25. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 5; xxv. 40, 45. John xii. 44. <sup>3</sup> 1 Kin. xvii. 10. Heb. vi. 10.

be crucified, a part of the sentence was, that they should carry the cross on which they were to die, to the place of execution. Thus Christ carried his, till he fainted from fatigue and exhaustion. See Note on Matt. xxvii. 31. The cross was usually composed of two rough beams of wood, united in the form of this figure, +. It was an instrument of death. See Notes on ch. xxvii. 31, 32. To carry it was burdensome, was disgraceful, was trying to the feelings, was an addition to the punishment. So, to carry the cross is a figurative expression, denoting that we must endure whatever is burdensome, or trying, or considered as disgraceful, in following Christ. It consists simply in doing our duty, let the world think of it or speak of it as they may. It does not consist in making trouble for ourselves, or doing things merely to be opposed; it is doing just what is required of us in the scriptures, let it produce whatever shame, disgrace, or pain it may. This every follower of Jesus is required to do.

39. *He that findeth his life, &c.* The word *life* in this passage is used evidently in two senses. The meaning may be expressed thus: he that is anxious to save his temporal life, or his comfort and security here, shall lose eternal life; or shall fail of heaven. He that is willing to risk, or lose, his comfort and life here, for my sake, shall find life everlasting, or shall be saved. The manner of speaking is similar to that where he said "let the dead bury their dead."

40—42. *He that receiveth you, &c.* In all these three illustrations Christ meant to teach substantially the same thing, that he that would entertain kindly, or treat with hospitality himself, his disciples, a prophet, or a righteous man, would show that he approved their character, and should not fail of proper reward. To receive in the name of a

in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a<sup>1</sup> righteous man's reward.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 27; xxv. 24—40. <sup>2</sup> Thom. i. 6, 7.

prophet, is to receive as a prophet; to do proper honour to his character; and to evince attachment to the cause in which he was engaged.

42. *These little ones.* By these are clearly meant his disciples. They are called little ones, to denote their want of wealth, rank, learning, and whatever the world calls great. They were little in the estimation of the world, and in their own estimation. They were learners, not yet teachers; and they made no pretensions to what attracts the admiration of mankind. ¶ *A cup of cold water only.* Few would refuse a cup of cold water to any man, if thirsty and weary; and yet few would give it to such an one because he was a Christian, or to express attachment to the Lord Jesus. In bestowing it on a man because he was a Christian, he would show love to the Saviour himself; in the other case he would give it from mere sympathy, or kindness, evincing no regard for the Christian, the Christian's Master, or his cause. In one case, he would show that he loved the cause of religion; in the other, not.

#### REMARKS.

I. From the narrative in this chapter, in connexion with that in Luke, we are permitted to see the Saviour's habits in regard to prayer. An important event was before him; an event on which, humanly speaking, depended the whole success of his religion—the choice of those who should be his messengers to mankind. He felt its importance; and even the Son of God sought the place of prayer, and during the night-watches asked the direction of his Father. His example shows that we, in great and trying circumstances, should seek particularly the direction of God.

II. We see the benevolence of the gospel. Ver. 7, 8. The apostles were to confer the highest favours on mankind

of cold water only in the of a disciple, verily I say

unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

reward. Like air, and sun beams, ter—gifts of God—these favours out price. The poor are welcome; , unaided by their wealth, are wel- so; the wide world may freely and partake the rich blessings of sel of peace.

Ministers of the gospel, and all wers of Jesus, should depend on vidence of God for support, and ply of their wants. Ver. 9, 10. t his apostles into a cold, un- world, and he took care of them. hat trust him shall not want. The s shall not be forsaken. The God in his hand all the pearls of the the gold in the heart of the earth, : cattle on a thousand hills, and ds the raven when it cries, will s cries of his children, and supply nts.

We see the duty of treating the messengers of salvation. Ver.

Christ expected that in every l town they would find some who relcome them. He promised the of a prophet to those who should a prophet; and assured of his those who had nothing better to than even a cup of cold water. inisters of religion are sent to the world. It is but right, that world they should be kindly l, and their wants supplied.

he guilt of rejecting the gospel. , 15. It is not a small matter to n offer of Heaven. A palace, a a mine of gold, might be rejected, npared with rejecting the gospel, l be a trifle. But life eternal is e thrones, and gold, and temples. t, all is lost. The gospel rejected, one. Nor hope, nor happiness, im that hath spurned this offer. quires every one to believe the and woe, woe, a greater woe than he guilty cities of the plain, to s rejects it.

judgment will certainly overtake ty. Ver. 15. It fell on Sodom, ill fall on all transgressors. None cape. Damnation may slumber er the wicked; and they may

long mock the God of truth, but in due time their feet will slide, and all creation shall not be able to save them from woe. How dangerous, how awful, is the condition of an impenitent sinner.

VII. We are to take proper care of our lives. Ver. 23. The apostles were to flee from danger, when they could do it without denying their Lord. So are we. He that throws away his life, when it might have been, and ought to have been, preserved, is a self-murderer. He that exposes himself when duty does not require it, and whose life pays the forfeit, goes before God, rushing unbid into his Maker's presence, nor can he be held guiltless.

VIII. We are to persevere, in our duty, through all trials. Ver. 23. Neither the world, nor pain, poverty, persecution, nor death, is to appal us. He that endures to the end, shall be saved. We have but one thing to do: to do the will of God; to be the Christian everywhere; and leave the event with him.

IX. God exercises a particular providence. Ver. 29, 30. He watches the falling sparrow, numbers the hairs of the head, and for the same reason presides over all other things. The Lord reigneth, says the psalmist, let the earth rejoice. Ps. xcvi. 1.

X. The duty of making a profession of religion. Ver. 32, 33. It must be done in the proper way, or Christ will disown us in the day of judgment. It is impossible to neglect it, and have evidence of piety. If ashamed of him, he will be of us.

XI. Religion is easy, and easily tested. Ver. 40—42. What more easy than to give a cup of water to a stranger; and what more easy than to know from what motive we do it! Yet how many are there who, while they would do the thing, would yet lose eternal life, rather than do it with a view of honouring Christ, or showing attachment to him! How dreadful is the opposition of the human heart to religion! How amazing that man will not do the slightest acts, to secure an interest in the kingdom of God!

## CHAPTER XI.

*John Baptist's inquiry, 1—6. John Baptist commended, 7—15. The generation captious, 16—19. Unimproved privileges, 20—24. God's sovereignty, 25—27. The weary invited, 28—30.*

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 Now <sup>1</sup>when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iv. 12; xiv. 3. Luke vii. 18—23.

## CHAPTER XI.

1. *And it came to pass, &c.* The directions to his apostles were given in the vicinity of Capernaum. He went from thence to preach in their cities; that is, in the cities in the vicinity of Capernaum, or in Galilee. He did not yet go into Judea.

2. The account to ver. 19 is found, with no material variation, in Luke vii. 18—35. John was in prison. Herod had thrown him into confinement, on account of John's faithfulness in reproving him for marrying his brother Philip's wife. See Matt. xiv. 3, 4.

It is not certainly known why John sent to Jesus. It might have been to satisfy his disciples that Jesus was the Messiah; or he might have been desirous of ascertaining for himself whether this person of whom he heard so much, was the same one whom he had baptized, and whom he knew to be the Messiah. See John i. 29.

3. *Art thou he that should come?* That is, art thou the Messiah, or the Christ? The Jews expected a Saviour. His coming had been long foretold. Gen. xlix. 10. Isa. ix. 1—6; xi. 1—5; xxxv. 4—6; liii. Dan. ix. 24—27. See also John vi. 14. Comp. Deut. xviii. 18, 19. In common language, therefore, he was familiarly described as he that was to come. Luke adds here, Luke vii. 21, that at the time when the messengers came to him, Jesus cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended <sup>2</sup> in me.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. viiii. 14, 15. 1 Cor. i. 22, 23. 1 Pet. ii. 8.

spirits. An answer was, therefore, ready to the inquiries of John.

4, 5. *Go and show John again, &c.* Jesus referred them for an answer to these miracles. They were proof that he was the Messiah. Prophets had indeed wrought miracles, but no prophet had wrought so many, or any so important. Jesus, moreover, wrought them in his own name, and by his own power. Prophets had done it by the power of God. Jesus, therefore, performed the works which none but the Messiah could do; and John might easily infer that he was the Christ. ¶ *The poor have the gospel preached to them.* It was predicted of the Messiah, that he would preach good tidings to the meek, Isa. lxi. 1; or, as it is rendered in the New Testament, preach the gospel to the poor. Luke iv. 18. By this, therefore, also, John might infer that he was truly the Messiah. It adds to the force of this testimony, that the poor have always been overlooked by Pharisees and philosophers. No sect of philosophers had condescended to notice them before Christ; and no system of religion had attempted to instruct them, before the Christian religion. In all other schemes, the poor have been passed by as unworthy of notice.

6. *And blessed is he, &c.* The word *offence* means a stumbling block. Note, Matt. v. 29. This verse might be rendered, 'happy is he to whom I shall not prove a stumbling block!' That is, happy is he who shall not take offence at my

7 ¶ And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iii. 1—2, 5. Luke vii. 24—30. <sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 14. Jas. i. 6.

poverty and lowliness of life, so as to reject me and my doctrine. Happy is he who can, notwithstanding that poverty and obscurity, see the evidence that I am the Messiah, and follow me. It is not improbable that John wished Jesus publicly to proclaim himself as the Christ, instead of seeking retirement. Jesus replied that he gave sufficient evidence of that by his works; that a man might discover it if he chose; and that he was blessed who would seek that evidence, and embrace him as the Christ, in spite of his humble manner of life.

7. *And as they departed, &c.* Jesus took occasion from the inquiries made by John's disciples, to instruct the people respecting the true character of John. Multitudes had gone out to hear him, when he preached in the desert, Matt. iii.; and it is probable that many had been attracted by the novelty of his appearance or doctrines, and many had gone simply to see and hear a man of singular habits and opinions. Probably many who followed Christ had been of that number. He took occasion, therefore, by some striking questions to examine the motives by which they had been drawn to his ministry. ¶ *A reed shaken with the wind?* The region of country in which John preached being overflowed annually by the Jordan, produced great quantities of reeds, or canes, of a light, fragile nature, easily shaken by the wind. They were, therefore, an image of a light, changing, inconstant man. John's sending to Christ to inquire his character, might have led some to suppose that he was changing and inconstant, like a reed. He had once acknowledged him to be the Messiah, and now, being in prison and sending to him to inquire into the fact, they might have supposed he had no firmness, or fixed principles. Jesus, by asking this question, declared, that *notwithstanding this ap-*

pearance, this was not the character of John.

9 But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is *he*, of whom it is

pearance, this was not the character of John.

8. *Clothed in soft raiment.* The kind of raiment here denoted was the light, thin clothing worn by effeminate persons. It was made commonly of fine linen, and was worn chiefly for ornament. Christ asks them whether they were attracted by anything like that. He says that the desert was not the place to expect it. In the palaces of kings, in the court of Herod, it might be expected. But not in the place where John was. This kind of clothing was an emblem of riches, splendour, effeminacy, feebleness of character. He meant to say that John was a man of a different stamp:—coarse in his exterior, hardy in his character, firm in his virtue, fitted to endure trials and privations, and thus qualified to be the forerunner of the toiling and suffering Messiah.

9. *A prophet.* He next asks whether they went to see a prophet? They had regarded him as such: and Jesus tells them that in this their apprehensions of him were correct. ¶ *More than a prophet.* Sustaining a character more elevated and sacred than the most distinguished of the ancient prophets. Those had been regarded as the most eminent of the prophets who had most clearly predicted the Messiah. Isaiah had been distinguished above all others for the sublimity of his writings, and the clearness with which he had foretold the coming of Christ. Yet John surpassed even him. He lived in the time of Christ: He predicted his coming with still more clearness. He was the instrument of introducing him to the nation. He was, therefore, first among the prophets.

10. *For this is he, &c.* The passage of scripture here quoted is found in Mal. iii. 1. The substance of it is contained also in Isa. xl. 3. ¶ *Prepare thy*



written,<sup>1</sup> Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among<sup>2</sup> them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding<sup>3</sup> he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xl. 3. Mal. iii. 1. Luke i. 76. <sup>2</sup> John v. 35. <sup>3</sup> John i. 15, 27; iii. 30.

way. That is, prepare the people; make them ready, by proper instructions, to receive the Messiah.

11. *Them that are born of women.* This is an emphatic way of saying that there had never been a greater man than John. See Job xiv. 1. ¶ *He that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he.* The phrase, *kingdom of heaven*, is used in many senses. See Note, Matt. iii. 2. It here probably means, in preaching the kingdom of God, or the gospel. It could hardly be affirmed of the obscurest and most ignorant Christian, that he had clearer views than Isaiah or John. But of the apostles of the Saviour, of the first preachers, who were with him, and who heard his instructions, it might be said, that they had more correct apprehensions than any of the ancient prophets, or John.

12. *And from the days of John, &c.* That is, from the days when John began to preach. It is not known how long this was, but it was not probably more than a year. Our Saviour here simply states a fact. He says there was a great rush, or a crowd pressing to hear John. Multitudes went out to hear him, as if they were about to take the kingdom of heaven by force. See Matt. iii. 5. So, says he, it has continued. Since the kingdom of heaven, or the gospel, has been preached, there has been a rush to it. Men have been earnest about it; they have come pressing to obtain the blessing, as if they would take it by violence. There is allusion here to the manner in which cities were taken. Besiegers pressed upon them with violence, and demolished the walls. With such earnestness and violence, he says, men had pressed around him and John, since they began to preach. There is no allusion here to the manner in which

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven<sup>4</sup> suffereth violence, and the violent take<sup>5</sup> it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which<sup>6</sup> was for to come.

<sup>4</sup> Or, is gotten by force, and they that thrust men, take it, &c. <sup>5</sup> Luke xvi. 12. Eph. vi. 11—13. Mal. iv. 5. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xvii. 12.

individual sinners seek salvation; but it is a simple record of the fact that multitudes had thronged around him and John to hear the gospel.

13. *All the prophets, &c.* It is meant by this verse that John introduced a new dispensation; and that the old one, where the prophets and the law of Moses were the guide, was closed when he preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. By the *law* is meant the five books of Moses; by the *prophets*, the remainder of the books of the Old Testament.

14. *If ye will receive it.* This is a way of speaking implying that the doctrine which he was about to state was different from their common views; that he was about to state something which varied from the common expectation, and which, therefore, they might be disposed to reject. ¶ *This is Elias, &c.* That is, Elijah. Elias is the Greek mode of writing the Hebrew word Elijah. An account of him is found in the first and second books of Kings. He was a distinguished prophet, and was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. 2 Kin. ii. 11. The prophet Malachi, ch. iv. 5, 6, predicted that Elijah should be sent before the coming of the Messiah, to prepare the way for him. By this was evidently meant, not that he should appear in person, but that one should appear with a striking resemblance to him; or as Luke, ch. i. 17, expresses it, "in the spirit and power of Elijah." But the Jews understood it differently. They expected that Elijah would appear in person. They also supposed that Jeremiah and some other of the prophets would also appear to usher in the promised Messiah, and to grace his advent. See Matt. xvi. 14; xvii. 10. John i. 21. This expectation was the reason why he used the words, *if ye will receive*

15 He <sup>1</sup> that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 ¶ But <sup>2</sup> whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ii. 7.    <sup>2</sup> Luke vii. 31.

and implying that the affirmation that John was the promised Elijah, was a doctrine contrary to their expectation.

15. *He that hath ears, &c.* This expression is frequently used by Christ. It is a proverbial expression, implying that the highest attention should be given to what was spoken. The doctrine about John he regarded as of the greatest importance. He among you, says Christ, that has the faculty of understanding this, or will believe that this is the Elijah spoken of, let him attend to it, and remember it.

16—19. *But whereunto shall I liken, &c.* Christ proceeds to reprove the inconsistency and fickleness of that age of men. He says they were like children. Nothing pleased them. He refers here to the plays or sports of children. Instrumental music, or piping, and dancing, were used in marriages and festivals, as a sign of joy. Children imitate their parents and others, and act over in play what they see done by others. Among their childish sports, therefore, was probably an imitation of a wedding, or festal occasion. We have seen also (Note, Matt. ix. 23), that funerals were attended with mournful music, and lamentation, and howling. It is not improbable that children also, in play, imitated a mournful funeral procession. One part are represented as sullen and dissatisfied. They would not enter into the play. Nothing pleased them. The others complained of it. We have, said they, taken all pains to please you. We have piped to you, played lively tunes, and engaged in cheerful sports, but you would not join with us; and then we have played different games, and imitated the mourning at funerals, and you are equally sullen; you have not lamented; you have not joined with us. Nothing pleases you. So, said Christ, is this generation of men. John came one way; neither eating nor drinking, abstaining as a Nazarene, and

unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, <sup>3</sup>He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating

<sup>3</sup> Ch. x. 25. John vii. 20.

you are not pleased with him. I, the Son of man, have come in a different manner, eating and drinking; not practising any austerity, but living like other men, and you are equally dissatisfied. Nay, you are less pleased. You calumniate him, and abuse me for not doing the very thing which displeased you in John. Nothing pleases you. You are fickle, changeable, inconstant, and abusive. ¶ *Markets.* Places to sell provisions; places of concourse where also children flocked together for play. ¶ *We have piped.* We have played on musical instruments. A pipe was a wind instrument of music, often used by shepherds. ¶ *Neither eating nor drinking.* That is, abstaining from some kinds of foods, and wine, as a Nazarene. It does not mean that he did not eat at all, but that he was remarkable for abstinence. ¶ *He hath a devil.* He is actuated by a bad spirit. He is irregular, strange, and cannot be a good man. ¶ *The Son of man came eating and drinking.* That is, living as others do; not practising austerity; and they accuse him of being fond of excess, and seeking the society of the wicked. ¶ *Gluttonous.* One given to excessive eating. *Wine-bibler.* One who drinks much wine. A great drinker. Jesus undoubtedly lived according to the general customs of the people of his time. He did not affect singularity; he did not separate himself as a Nazarene; he did not practise severe austerities. He ate that which was common, and drank that which was common. As wine was a common article of beverage among the people, he drank it. It was the pure juice of the grape, and for anything that can be proved, it was without fermentation. In regard to the kind of wine which was used, see Note, John ii. 10.—No one should plead this example, at any rate, in favour of making use of the wines that are commonly used in this country

<sup>1</sup> and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans <sup>2</sup> and sinners. But <sup>3</sup> wisdom is justified of her children.

20 ¶ Then <sup>4</sup> began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 10. John ii. 2. <sup>2</sup> Luke xv. 2; xix. 7. <sup>3</sup> Psal. xcii. 5, 6. Prov. xvii. 24. <sup>4</sup> Luke x. 13—16.

—wines, many of which are manufactured here, and without a particle of the pure juice of the grape, and most of which are mixed with brandy, or with noxious drugs, to give them colour and flavour. ¶ *Wisdom is justified of her children.* The children of wisdom are the wise—those who understand. He means that though that generation of Pharisees and fault-finders did not appreciate the conduct of John and himself, yet the wise, the candid—those who understood the reason of their conduct—would approve of and do justice to it.

20. Then began he to upbraid, &c. That is, to reprove, rebuke, or denounce heavy judgment.

21. *Chorazin and Bethsaida.* These were towns not far from Capernaum, but the precise situation is unknown. Bethsaida means literally a house of hunting or of game, and it was probably situated on the banks of the sea of Galilee, and supported itself by hunting or fishing. It was the residence of Philip, Andrew, and Peter. John i. 44. It was enlarged by Philip the Tetrarch, and called Julia, after the emperor's daughter. ¶ *Tyre and Sidon.* These were cities of Phœnicia, formerly very opulent, and distinguished for merchandise. They were situated on the shore of Palestine on the Mediterranean sea. They were, therefore, well known to the Jews. Tyre is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament as being the place through which Solomon derived many of the materials for building the temple. 2 Chron. ii. 11—16. It was also a place against which one of the most important and pointed prophecies of Isaiah was directed. See notes on Isa. xxiii. Comp. Ezek. xxvi. 4—

14. Both these cities were very ancient. Sidon was situated within the bounds of

21 <sup>5</sup> Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, <sup>6</sup> Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented <sup>7</sup> long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It <sup>8</sup> shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Si-

<sup>5</sup> Prov. i. 24—31; xxix. 1. John iii. 26, 27. <sup>6</sup> John xii. 21. <sup>7</sup> Jonah iii. 8—10. <sup>8</sup> Ch. x. 15.

the tribe of Asher, Josh. xix. 28; but this tribe could never get possession of it. Judg. i. 31. It was famous for its great trade and navigation. Its inhabitants were the first remarkable merchants in the world, and were much celebrated for their luxury. In the time of our Saviour it was probably a city of much splendour and extensive commerce. It is now called Seide, or Saide, and is far less populous and splendid than it was in the time of Christ. It was subdued successively by the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Romans, the latter of whom deprived it of its freedom.

Messrs. Fisk and King, American missionaries, passed through Sidon in the summer of 1823, and estimated the population, as others have estimated it, at eight or ten thousand; but Mr. Goodell, another American missionary, took up his residence there in June, 1824, for the purpose of studying the Armenian language with a bishop of the Armenian church who lives there, and of course had far better opportunities to know the statistics of the place. He tells us there are six Mohammedan mosques, a Jewish synagogue, a Maronite, Latin, and Greek church. The number of inhabitants may be estimated at three thousand, of whom one half may be Mussulmans.

Tyre was situated about twenty miles south of Sidon. It was built partly on a small island, about seventy paces from the shore, and partly on the main land. It was a city of great extent and splendour, and extensive commerce. It abounded in luxury and wickedness. It was often besieged. It held out against Shalmaneser five years, and was taken by Nebuchadnezzar after a siege of thirteen years. It was afterwards rebuilt, and was at length taken by Alexander the Great, after a

## CHAPTER XI.

*Near Capernaum.*

day of judgment, than

hou, Capernaum, which  
unto heaven, shalt be  
wn to hell: for if the  
ks, which have been  
ee, had been done in  
would have remained  
y.

say unto you, <sup>3</sup> That it

-15. Lam. ii. 1. <sup>2</sup> Gen. xlii.  
Ezek. xvi. 48-50. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 24.

to siege of five months.  
igns now of the ancient city.  
ence only of a few miserable  
l contains, amidst the ruins  
magnificence, only a few  
ras fulfilled the prophecy of  
ou shalt be built no more;  
e sought for, yet shalt thou  
d again," xxvi. 21. For a  
Tyre as it was formerly,  
ow, see Notes on Isa. xxiii.  
th and ashes. Sackcloth  
cloth, like canvas, used for  
the poor, and for the more  
cles of domestic economy.  
also as a sign of mourning.  
o frequently threw ashes on  
s expressive of grief. Jer.  
meaning is, that they would  
d with expressions of deep  
e Nineveh, they would have  
ilt and danger, and would  
rom their iniquity. Heathen  
ave received him better than  
he Jews, his native land.

hou, Capernaum. See Note,  
¶ Which art exalted to  
is an expression used to  
privileges. Christ meant, that  
ere peculiarly favoured with  
The city was prosperous. It  
l in commerce. It was sig-  
ed by its wealth. Most of  
gnally favoured by the pre-  
aching, and the miracles of  
us Christ. Here he spent a  
his time in the early part of  
and in Capernaum and its  
d he performed his chief

Shalt be brought down to  
does not mean that all the  
d go to hell; but that the

shall be more tolerable for the land  
of Sodom in the day of judgment,  
than for thee.

25 ¶ At <sup>4</sup> that time Jesus an-  
swered and said, I thank thee,  
O Father, Lord of heaven and  
earth, because thou hast hid these  
things from the wise and pru-  
dent, and hast revealed them unto  
babes.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Luke x. 21, 22. <sup>5</sup> Psa. viii. 2. Jer. i. 7, 8.  
1 Cor. i. 27.

city which had flourished so prosperously,  
should lose its prosperity, and occupy the  
lowest place among cities. The word  
*hell* is used here, not to denote a place of  
punishment in the future world, but a  
state of desolation and destruction as a  
city. It stands in contrast with the word  
heaven. As their being exalted to heaven,  
did not mean that the people would all  
be saved, or dwell in heaven, so their  
being brought down to hell refers to the  
desolation of the city. Their privileges,  
honours, wealth, &c., should be taken  
away, and they should sink as low among  
cities as they had been before exalted.  
This has been strictly fulfilled. In the  
wars between the Jews and the Romans,  
Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, &c.,  
were so completely desolated, that it is  
difficult to determine their former situa-  
tions. It is not to be denied also that  
Christ here threatened future punishment  
on those who rejected him. The truth  
inculcated is, that those who are peculiarly  
favoured must be punished accordingly if  
they abuse their privileges. ¶ *If the  
mighty works—had been done in Sodom.*  
See Note, Matt. x. 15. Sodom was de-  
stroyed on account of its great wickedness.  
Christ says, if his miracles had been done  
there, they would have repented, and con-  
sequently the city would not have been  
destroyed. As it was, it would be better  
for Sodom in the day of judgment than  
for Capernaum, for its inhabitants would  
not be called to answer for the abuse of  
so great privileges.

25, 26. *From the wise and prudent.*  
That is, from those who thought them-  
selves wise—wise according to the world's  
estimation of wisdom—the men of philo-  
sophy, and self-conceit, and science,

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All <sup>1</sup> things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth <sup>2</sup> any man the Father, save the Son, and he to

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxviii. 18. Luke x. 22. John iii. 35; xvii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 27. <sup>2</sup> John i. 18. 1 John v. 20.

falsely so called. 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. ¶ *Has revealed them unto babes.* To the poor, ignorant, and obscure, the teachable, simple, and humble. Such as his disciples were. He had reference here, probably, to the proud and haughty Scribes and Pharisees in Capernaum. They rejected his gospel, but it was the pleasure of God to reveal it to obscure and more humble men. The reason given, the only satisfactory reason, is, that it so *seemed good* in the sight of God. In this the Saviour acquiesced, saying—*Eren so, Father:* and in the dealings of God it is fit that all should acquiesce. Such is the will of God, is often the only explanation which can be offered in regard to the various events which happen to us on earth. Such is the will of God, is the only account which can be given of the reason of the dispensations of his grace. Our understanding is often confounded. We are stopped in all our efforts at explanation. Our philosophy fails, and all that we can say is, *Even so, Father,* for so it seems good to thee. And this is enough. That God does a thing, is, after all, the best reason which we can have that it is right. It is a security that nothing wrong is done, and though it be now mysterious, yet light will hereafter shine upon it like the light of noon-day. I should have a better security that a thing was right if I could say that I knew such was the will of God, than I should were I to depend on my own reason. In the one case I confide in the infallible and most perfect God; in the other I rely on the reason of a frail and erring man. God never errs; but nothing is more common than for men to err.

27. *All things are delivered, &c.* The same doctrine is clearly taught often in the New Testament. See John iii. 35; vi. 46; x. 15. Col. i. 16, 17. It means that Christ has control over all things, for the good of his church; that the govern-

whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

28 ¶ Come unto me, all ye that labour<sup>3</sup> and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn<sup>4</sup> of me; for I am meek and

<sup>3</sup> Isa. lv. 1—4.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. ii. 8—8. 1 Pet. ii. 21.

ment of the universe is committed to him as Mediator, that he may redeem his people, and guide them to glory. Eph. i. 20—22. *No man knoweth the Son.* That is, such is the nature of the Son of God; such the mystery of the union between the divine and human nature; such his exalted character as divine, that no mortal can fully comprehend him. None but God fully knows him. Had he been a mere man, this language surely would not have been used of him. ¶ *Neither knoweth any man the Father, &c.* In the original this is, *neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son.* That is, no one man or angel clearly comprehends the character of the infinite God, but the Son—the Lord Jesus—and he to whom he makes him known. This he does by revealing the character of God clearly, and more especially by manifesting his character as a sin-forgiving God, to the soul that is weary and heavy laden. John xvii. 6.

28. *All ye that labour and are heavy laden.* Christ here, perhaps, refers primarily to the Jews, who groaned under the weight of their ceremonial laws, and the traditions of the elders. Acts xv. 10. He tells them, that by coming to him, and embracing the new system of religion, they would be freed from these burdensome rites and ceremonies. There can be no doubt, however, that he meant here chiefly to address the poor, lost, ruined sinner; the man burdened with a consciousness of his transgressions, trembling at his danger, and seeking deliverance. For such there is relief. Christ tells them to come to him, to believe in him, and to trust him, and him only, for salvation. Doing this he will give them rest—rest from their sins, from the alarms of conscience, from the terrors of the law, and from the fears of eternal death.

29 Take my yoke. This is a figure

lowly<sup>1</sup> in heart: and<sup>2</sup> ye shall find rest unto your souls.

<sup>1</sup> Zech. ix. 9. <sup>2</sup> Jer. vi. 16.

taken from the use of oxen, and hence signifying to labour for one, or in the service of any one. The yoke is used in the Bible as an emblem, 1. Of bondage or slavery, Lev. xxvi. 13. Ezek. xxxiv. 27. 2. Of afflictions or crosses, Lam. iii. 27. 3. Of the punishment of sin, Lam. i. 14. 4. Of the commandments of God. 5. Of legal ceremonies, Acts xv. 10. Gal. v. 1. It refers here to the religion of the Redeemer, and meant that they should embrace his system of religion and obey him. All virtue and all religion imply restraint—the restraint of our bad passions, and inclinations, and subjection to laws; and the Saviour means to say that the restraints and laws of his religion were mild, and gentle, and easy. Let any one compare them with the burdensome and expensive ceremonies of the Jews. See Acts xv. 10; or with the religious rites of the heathen every where, or with the requirements of the popish system, and he will see how true it is that his yoke is easy. And let his laws and requirements be compared with the laws which sin opposes on its votaries—the law of fashion, and honour, and sensuality, and he will feel that religion is freedom, John viii. 36.

"He is a freeman, whom the truth makes free,  
And all are slaves beside."

It is easier to be a Christian than a sinner; and of all the yokes ever imposed on men, that of the Redeemer is the lightest. ¶ *For I am meek*, &c. See Note, Matt. v. 5. This was eminently Christ's personal character. But this is not its meaning here. He is giving a reason why they should embrace his religion. That was, that he was not harsh, overbearing, and oppressive, like the Pharisees, but meek, mild, and gentle in his government. His laws were reasonable and tender; and it would be easy to obey him.

30. *My yoke is easy*, &c. That is, the services that I shall require are easily rendered. They are not burdensome, like all other systems of religion. So the Christian always finds them. In coming to him, there is a peace which passeth all understanding; in believing in him, joy; in following him through evil and good

30 For my yoke is easy, <sup>3</sup> and my burden is light.

<sup>3</sup> John xvi. 33. 2 Cor. i. 45; 7:10, 10. 1 John v. 3.

report, a comfort which the world giveth not; in bearing trials, and in persecution, the hope of glory; and in keeping his commandments, great reward.

#### REMARKS.

I. Anxiety about the person and works of Christ, is peculiarly proper. Ver. 2, 3. John was solicitous to ascertain his true character; and nothing is of more importance for all, than to understand his true character and will. On him depends all the hope that man has of happiness beyond the grave. He saves, or man must perish. He will save, or we must die for ever. With what earnestness, therefore, should the old and the young inquire into his character and will. Our eternal all demands it; and while this is delayed, we are endangering our everlasting felicity.

II. Clear proof has been furnished that Jesus is the Christ, and can save us. Ver. 4, 5. If his miracles did not prove that he came from God, nothing can prove it. If he could open the eyes of the blind, then he can enlighten the sinner; if he could unstop the ears of the deaf, then he can cause us to hear and live; if he could heal the sick, and make the lame walk, then he can heal our spiritual maladies, and make us walk in the way of life; if he could raise the dead, then he can raise those who are dead in sin, and breathe into them the breath of eternal life. If he was willing to do all this for the body which is soon to die, then he will be much more willing to do it for the soul that never dies. Then the poor, lost sinner may come and live.

III. We see in this chapter Christ's manner of praising or complimenting men. Ver. 7—15. He gave, in no measured terms, his exalted opinion of John; gave him praise which had been bestowed on no other mortal; ranked him far above the purest and sublimest of the prophets. But this was done not in the presence of John; nor was it done in the presence of those who would inform John of it; it was when the disciples of John had departed. and his commendation of John

CHAPTER XII.

*Mersey rather than ritual obedience, 1—8. The withered hand cured, 9—13. Christ's meekness and compassion, 14—21. Blind and dumb demoniac cured, 22, 23. Imputation on Christ of leagues with Beelzebub, 24—30. Sin against the Holy Ghost, 31, 32. Idle*

*words, 33—37. A sign demanded, 38—45. Whom Christ most loves, 46—50.*

AT that time<sup>1</sup> Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an

<sup>1</sup> Mark ii. 23—25. Luke vi. 1—5.

was spoken to the multitude. Ver. 7. He waited till his disciples were gone, apprehending, doubtless, that they would be likely to report what he said in praise of their master, and then expressed his high opinion of his character. The practice of the world is to praise others to their faces, or in the presence of those who will be sure to inform them of it, and to speak evil of them when absent. Jesus delivered his unfavourable opinions of others to the men themselves; their excellences he took pains to commend where they would not be likely to hear of them. He did good to both; and in both, prevented the existence of pride.

IV. The wicked take much pains, and are often fickle and inconsistent, for the sake of abusing and calumniating religious men. Ver. 18, 19. They found much fault with our Saviour, for doing the very same thing which they blamed John for not doing. So it is commonly with men who slander professors of religion. They risk their own character, to prove that others are hypocrites, or sinners. The object is not truth, but calumny, and opposition to religion; and hitherto no means have been too base, or too wicked, to pour contempt on the followers of Christ.

V. The purest characters may expect the shafts of calumny and malice; and often in proportion to their purity. Ver. 19. Even the Saviour of the world was accused of being intemperate, and a glutton. If the only perfectly pure being that ever trod the earth was thus accused, let not his followers think that any strange thing has happened to them, if they are falsely accused.

VI. Judgments will overtake guilty men, and cities, and nations. Ver. 21, 22. They fell on Sodom, Tyre, Sidon, and Capernaum. Those judgments may long linger; but in due time the hand of God will fall on the wicked, and they will die, for ever die.

VII. The wicked will suffer in proportion to their privileges. Ver. 23, 24. So it was with Capernaum. And if they of ancient days suffered thus; if more tremendous judgments fell on them than even on guilty Sodom, what shall be the doom of those who go down to hell from this day of light! The Saviour was at Capernaum a few days; he worked a few miracles there; but they had not, as we have, all his instructions; they had not sabbath schools, and Bible classes, and the stated preaching of the gospel, nor was the world blessed then as now with extensive and powerful revivals of religion. How awful must be the doom of those who are educated in the ways of religion; who are instructed from sabbath to sabbath; who grow up amidst the means of grace, and then are lost!

VIII. The poor and needy, the weary and heavy-laden, the soul sick of sin and the world, conscious of guilt, and afraid to die, may come to Jesus Christ and live. Ver. 28—30. The invitation is wide as the world. The child and the old man may seek and find salvation at the feet of the same Saviour. None is too young: none too old. Christ is full of mercy, and all who come shall find peace. O how should we, in this sinful and miserable world, borne down with sin and exposed each moment to death, how should we come and find the peace which he has promised to all! and take the yoke which all have found to be light!

CHAPTER XII.

1—8. The account contained in these verses is also recorded in Mark ii. 23—28, and Luke vi. 1—5.

1. *At that time.* Luke, ch. vi. 1. fixes the time more particularly. He says that it was the second sabbath after the first. To understand this, it is proper to remark, that the passover was observed during the month Abib, or Nisan, answering to the

hungred, and began to pluck <sup>1</sup> the ears of corn, and to eat.

2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do <sup>2</sup> upon the sabbath day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, <sup>3</sup> when he was an hungred, and they that were with him ;

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxiii. 25. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xxxi. 15. <sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. xxi. 6.

latter part of March, and the first of April. The feast was held seven days, commencing on the fourteenth day of the month, Exod. xii. 1—28; xxiii. 15; on the second day of the paschal week. The law required that a sheaf of barley should be offered up, as the first fruits of the harvest. Lev. xxiii. 10, 11. From this day seven weeks were reckoned to the feast of pentecost, Lev. xxiii. 15, 16, called also the feast of weeks, Deut. xvi. 10, and the feast of the harvest. Exod. xxiii. 16. This second day in the feast of the pass-over, or of unleavened bread, was the beginning, therefore, from which they reckoned towards the pentecost. The sabbath in the week following would be the second sabbath after this first one in the reckoning; and this was doubtless the time mentioned when Christ went through the fields. It should be further mentioned, that in Judea the barley harvest commences about the beginning of May, and both that and the wheat harvest are over in about three weeks. Barley is in full ear in the beginning of April. There is no improbability, therefore, in this narrative on account of the season of the year. This feast was always held at Jerusalem. ¶ *Through the corn.* Through the barley, or wheat. The word *corn*, as used in our translation of the Bible, has no reference to maize, or Indian corn, of which it is scarcely probable that the translators knew any thing, but it was applied, as it is still, to wheat, rye, oats, and barley. This explains the circumstance that they rubbed it in their hands, Luke vi. 1, to separate the grain from the chaff.

2. *Upon the sabbath day.* The Pharisees, doubtless desirous of finding fault with Christ, said that in plucking the

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, <sup>4</sup> which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only <sup>5</sup> for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, <sup>6</sup> how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple <sup>7</sup> profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxv. 30. <sup>5</sup> Exod. xxix. 32, 33. <sup>6</sup> Num. xxviii. 9. <sup>7</sup> John vii. 22, 23.

grain on the sabbath day, they had violated the commandment. Moses had commanded the Hebrews to abstain from all servile work on the sabbath. Exod. xx. 10; xxxv. 2, 3. Num. xv. 32—36. On any other day this would have been clearly lawful, for it was permitted. Deut. xxiii. 25.

3. *But he said unto them, &c.* To vindicate his disciples, he referred them to a similar case, recorded in the Old Testament, and therefore, one with which they ought to have been acquainted. This was the case of David. The law commanded that twelve loaves of bread should be laid on the table in the holy place in the tabernacle, to remain a week, and then to be eaten by the priests only. Their place was supplied then by fresh bread. This was called the *shew-bread*. Lev. xxiv. 5—9. David, fleeing before Saul, weary and hungry, had come to Abimelech the priest; had found only this bread, had asked it of him, and had eaten it, contrary to the letter of the law. 1 Sam. xxi. 1—7. David was a high authority among the Jews. This act had passed uncondemned. It proved that in cases of necessity the laws did not bind a man:—a principle which all laws admit. So the necessity of the disciples justified them in doing on the sabbath what would have been otherwise unlawful.

4, 5. *House of God.* That was, the tabernacle, the temple not being then built. ¶ *In the law.* In the law of Moses. ¶ *Profane the sabbath.* He referred them to the conduct of the priests also. On the sabbath days they were engaged, as well as on other days, in killing beasts for sacrifice. Num. xxviii. 9, 10. Two lambs were killed on



6 But I say unto you, That in this place is *one* greater <sup>1</sup> than the temple.

7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, <sup>2</sup> I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

9 And <sup>3</sup> when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue :

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxiii. 17—21. <sup>2</sup> Chron. vi. 18. Mal. iii. 1. <sup>3</sup> Hos. vi. 6. <sup>4</sup> Mark iii. 1—5. Luke vi. 6—10.

the sabbath, in addition to the daily sacrifice. The priests must be engaged in slaying them, and making fires to burn them in sacrifice ; whereas to kindle a fire was expressly forbidden the Jews on the sabbath, Exod. xxxv. 3 ; they were obliged to skin them, prepare them for sacrifice, and burn them. They did that which, for other persons to do, would have been profaning the sabbath. Yet they were blameless. They did what was necessary and commanded. This was done in the very temple, too, the place of holiness, where the law should be most strictly observed.

6. *One greater than the temple.* Here he refers to himself, and to his own dignity and power. I have power over the laws : I can grant to my disciples a dispensation from the Jewish laws. An act which I command or permit them to do, is therefore right. This proves that he was divine. None but God can authorize men to do a thing contrary to the divine laws. He refers them again to a passage he had before quoted, see Note, Matt. ix. 13, showing that God preferred acts of righteousness, rather than a precise observance of a ceremonial law.

Mark adds, ch. ii. 27, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." That is, the sabbath was intended for the welfare of man ; designed to promote his happiness ; and not to produce misery, by harsh, unfeeling requirements. It is not to be so interpreted as to produce suffering, by making the necessary supply of wants unlawful. Man was not made for the sabbath. Man was created first, and then the sabbath was

10 ¶ And, behold, there was man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days ? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, as lift it out ?

<sup>4</sup> Luke xiv. 3. <sup>5</sup> Exod. xxiii. 4, 5. Deut. xxi. 4.

appointed for his happiness. Gen. ii. 1—His necessities, his real comforts as wants, are not to bend to that which was made for him. The laws are to be interpreted favourably to his real wants as comforts. This authorizes works only of real necessity, not of imaginary wants, amusement, or common business, as worldly employments.

To crown all, Christ says that I was Lord of the sabbath. He had right to direct the manner of its observance—undoubted proof that he is divine.

9—13. The account contained in the verses is recorded also in Mark iii. 1—and Luke vi. 6—10.

10. *A man which had his hand withered.* This was probably one form of palsy. See Note, Matt. iv. 24.

Mark and Luke have mentioned some circumstances omitted by Matthew. They say that Jesus addressed the man, as told him to stand forth in the midst. He then addressed the people. He asks them if it was lawful to do good on the sabbath day ? This was admitted by all their teachers, and it could not be denied. They were therefore silent. He then appealed to them, and drew argument from their conduct. A man that had a sheep that should fall into a pit on the sabbath day would exercise the common offices of humanity, and draw out. If a man would save the life of a sheep, was it not proper to save the life of a man ? By a reference to their own conduct, he silenced them.

Mark adds that he looked on them with anger ; that is, with strong disapprobation of their conduct. Their en-

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore, it is lawful to do well on the sabbath-days.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

and malignity excited feelings of holy indignation. See Note on Mark iii. 5.

12. *A man better than a sheep.* Of more consequence, or value. If you would show an act of kindness to a brute beast on the sabbath, how much more importance is it to evince similar kindness to one made in the image of God, one for whom the Saviour came to die, and who may be raised up to everlasting life. ¶ *It is lawful to do well.* This was universally allowed by the Jews in the abstract; and Jesus only showed them, that the principle on which they acted in other things, applied with more force to the case before him, and that the act which he was about to perform was, by their own confession, lawful.

13. *And he said, Stretch forth thine hand.* This was a remarkable commandment. The man might have said that he had no strength; that it was a thing which he could not do. Yet, being commanded, it was his duty to obey. He did so, and was healed. So the sinner. It is his duty to obey whatever God commands. He will give strength to those who attempt to do his will. It is not right to plead, when God commands us to do a thing, that we have no strength. God will give us strength, if there is a disposition to obey. At the same time, however, this passage should not be applied to the sinner as if it proved that he has no more strength or ability than the man who had the withered hand. It proves so such thing. It has no reference to any such case. And it should not be used as if it proved any such thing. It may be used to prove, that man should instantly obey the commands of God without pausing to examine the question about his ability, and especially without saying that he can do nothing. What would the Saviour have said to this man, if he had objected that he could not stretch out his hand? ¶ *It was restored*

14 ¶ Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;

<sup>1</sup> Or, took counsel.

*whole.* Christ had before claimed divine authority and power. Ver. 6—9. He now showed that he possessed it. By his own power he healed him; thus evincing by a miracle, that his claim of being Lord of the sabbath was well founded.

These two cases determine what may be done on the sabbath. The one was a case of necessity; the other of mercy. The example of the Saviour, and his explanations, show that these are a part of the proper duties of that holy day. Beyond an honest and conscientious discharge of these two duties, men may not devote the sabbath to any secular purpose. If they do, they do it at their peril. They go beyond what his authority authorizes them to do. They do what he claimed the special right of doing, as being Lord of the sabbath. They usurp his place; and act and legislate where God only has a right to act and legislate. Men may as well trample down any other law of the Bible, as that respecting the sabbath.

14—21. This account is found also in Mark iii. 6—12.

14. *The Pharisees—held a council, &c.* Mark adds, that the Herodians also took a part in this plot. They were probably a political party, attached firmly to Herod. See Note, Matt. iii. 7. The friends of Herod were opposed to Christ, and ever ready to join any plot against his life. They remembered, doubtless, the attempts of Herod the Great against him when he was the babe of Bethlehem; and they were stung with the memory of the escape of Jesus from his bloody hands. The attempt against him now was the effect of envy. They were enraged also that he had foiled them in the argument; they hated his popularity; they were losing their influence; and they, therefore, resolved to take him out of the way.

15. *Jesus—withdrew himself, &c.* He knew the design against his life. He knew that his hour was not yet come;

16 And charged them that they should not make him known :

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, <sup>1</sup> saying,

18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen ; my beloved, in whom

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xlii. 1-4.

and he therefore sought security. By remaining, his presence would only have provoked them farther, and endangered his own life. He acted, therefore, the part of christian prudence, and withdrew. See Note, Matt. x. 23.

Mark adds, that he withdrew to the sea ; that is, to the sea of Galilee, or Tiberias. He names also the places from which the multitude came: an important circumstance, as it throws light on the passage quoted ver. 21, "In his name shall the Gentiles trust."

Pressed by the crowd, Mark iii. 9, he went aboard a small vessel, or boat, called by Mark a ship. This he did for the convenience of being separated from them, and more easily addressing them. We are to suppose the lake still and calm, the multitudes—most of whom were sick and diseased—standing on the shore, and pressing to the water's edge ; and Jesus thus healing their diseases, and preaching to them the good news of salvation. No scene could be more sublime than this.

16. *And he charged them, &c.* He was, at this time, desirous of concealment. He wished to avoid their plots, and to save his life.

17. *That it might be fulfilled, &c.* Matthew here quotes a passage from Isa. xlii. 1-4, to show the reason why he thus retired from his enemies and sought concealment. The Jews, and the disciples also at first, expected that the Messiah would be a conqueror, and vindicate himself from all his enemies. When they saw him retiring before them, and instead of subduing them by force, seeking a place of concealment, it was contrary to all their previous notions of the Messiah. Matthew, by this quotation, shows that their conceptions of him had been wrong. Instead of a warrior and an earthly conqueror, he was predicted under a totally different character. Instead of shouting

my soul is well pleased : I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry ; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed <sup>2</sup> shall he not

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 28. Psa. li. 17. Isa. xl. 11.

for battle, lifting up his voice in the streets, oppressing the feeble—breaking bruised reeds, and quenching smoking flax, as a conqueror—he would be peaceful, retiring, and strengthening the feeble, and cherishing the faintest desires of holiness. This appears to be the general meaning of this quotation here. Comp. my Note on the passage.

18. *My servant.* That is, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, called a servant from his taking the form of a servant, or his being born in a humble condition, Phil. ii. 7, and from his obeying or serving God. See Heb. x. 9. ¶ *Shall show judgment to the Gentiles.* The word *judgment* means, in the Hebrew, law, commands, &c. Psa. xix. 9 ; cxix. 29, 30. It means the whole system of truth ; the law of God in general ; the purpose, plan, or judgment of God, about human duty and conduct. Here it means evidently the system of gospel truth, the christian scheme. ¶ *Gentiles.* All who were not Jews. This prophecy was fulfilled by the multitudes coming to him from Idumea and beyond Jordan, and Tyre and Sidon, as recorded by Mark iii. 7, 8.

19. *He shall not strive, &c.* He shall not shout, as a warrior. He shall be meek, and retiring, and peaceful. Streets were places of concourse. The meaning is, that he should not seek publicity and popularity.

20. *A bruised reed, &c.* The reed is an emblem of feebleness, as well as change. Matt. xi. 7. A bruised, broken reed, is an emblem of the poor and oppressed. It means that he would not oppress the feeble and poor, as victorious warriors and conquerors did. It is also an expressive emblem of the soul broken and contrite on account of sin, weeping and mourning for transgression. He will not break it. That is, he will not be haughty, unforgiving, and cruel. He will heal it, pardon it, and give it strength. ¶ *Smoking flax.*

reak, and smoking flax shall he  
ot quench, till he send forth judg-  
ment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the  
Gentiles trust.

22 ¶ Then <sup>1</sup> was brought unto  
him one possessed with a devil,  
blind, and dumb: and he healed  
him, insomuch that the blind and  
dumb both spake and saw.

<sup>1</sup> Mark iii. 11. Luke xi. 14.

his refers to the wick of a lamp when  
the oil is exhausted: the dying, flickering  
flame and smoke that hangs over it. It  
is an emblem, also, of feebleness and in-  
firmity. He would not farther oppress it  
and extinguish it. He would not be like  
the Jews, proud and overbearing, and  
trampling down the poor. It is expres-  
sive, also, of the languishing graces of the  
people of God. He will not treat them  
harshly or unkindly, but will cherish the  
feeble flame, minister the oil of grace, and  
kindle it into a blaze. ¶ *Till he send  
with judgment unto victory.* Judgment  
here means truth; the truth of God, the  
gospel. It shall be victorious. It shall  
not be vanquished. Though not such a  
conqueror as the Jews expected, yet he  
shall conquer. Though mild and retiring,  
yet his scheme shall be victorious.

21. *And in his name, &c.* The Hebrew  
Isaiah is, "And the isles shall wait for  
his law." The idea is, however, the same.  
The isles denote the Gentiles, or a part of  
the Gentiles—those out of Judea. The  
meaning is, that the gospel should be  
reached to the Gentiles, and that they  
should receive it. See my Note on Isa.  
li. 1, for an explanation of the word  
lands, as it is used in the Bible.

22—30. *One possessed with a devil.*  
See Note, Matt. iv. 24. The same account,  
substantially, is found in Mark iii. 22—27,  
and Luke xi. 14—26.

23. *Is not this the Son of David?*  
That is, is not this the promised descen-  
dant of David, the Messiah? They were  
acquainted with the prophecy in Isa. xxxv.  
: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be  
opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be  
unstopped;" and they inferred that he  
must be the promised Messiah who should  
be able to do this. This inference was

23 And all the people were  
amazed, and said, Is not this the  
Son of David?

24 But when the Pharisees heard  
it, they said, This fellow doth not  
cast out devils, but by <sup>2</sup> Beelzebub  
the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their <sup>3</sup>  
thoughts, and said unto them,  
Every kingdom divided against

<sup>2</sup> Beelzebub. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxxxix. 2. John ii. 24, 25.

drawn by the common people, and not  
by the proud and haughty Pharisees. It  
is not uncommon that men of plain com-  
mon sense, though unlearned, see the true  
beauty and meaning of the Bible, while  
those who are filled with pride and science,  
falsely so called, are blinded.

24. *But when the Pharisees heard it,*  
&c. It was necessary for the Pharisees,  
who had determined to reject Jesus of  
Nazareth, to account in some way for the  
miracles he had wrought. Here was a  
manifest miracle, an exertion of power  
unquestionably superior to what men  
could do. The common people were fast  
drawing the proper inferences from it, and  
coming into the belief that this was the  
Messiah. The authority and power of  
the Pharisees were declining, and about  
to become extinct. Unless, therefore,  
some way should be devised of account-  
ing for these facts, their influence would  
be at an end. Whatever way of account-  
ing for them was adopted, it was neces-  
sary that they should acknowledge that  
there was superhuman power. The people  
were fully persuaded of this; and no man  
could deny it. They therefore ascribed it  
to the prince of the devils—to Beelzebub.  
In this they had two objects: 1. To con-  
code to the people that here was a  
miracle, or a work above mere human  
power. 2. To throw all possible contempt  
on Jesus. Beelzebub was an opprobrious  
name, given to the worst and vilest even  
of the devils. See Matt. x. 25. It denoted  
the god of flies, or the god of filth; and  
hence the god of idolatry, which in their  
view, was filth and abomination.

25. *And Jesus knew their thoughts,*  
&c. To know the thoughts of the heart  
belongs only to God. Psa. cxxxix. 2.  
Jer. xvii. 10. ¶ *Every kingdom, &c.*

itself is brought to desolation ; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand :<sup>1</sup>

• 26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself ; how shall then his kingdom stand ?

27 And if I by Beelzebub<sup>2</sup> cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out ? therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xix. 2, 3. Gal. v. 15. Rev. xvi. 19.  
<sup>2</sup> Ver. 24.

Their subtle and cunning device was completely foiled, and Jesus made their argument recoil on their own heads. A kingdom, or a family can prosper only by living in harmony. The different parts and members must unite in promoting the same objects. If divided, if one part undoes what the other does, it must fall. So with the kingdom of Satan. It is your doctrine that Satan has possessed these whom I have cured. It is, also, your doctrine that he has helped me to cure them. If so, then he has helped me to undo what he had done. He has aided me to cast himself out ; that is, to oppose and discomfit himself. At this rate, how can there be any stability in his kingdom ? It must fall ; and Satan must have less than human prudence.

27. *By whom do your children, &c.* Christ was not satisfied by showing them the intrinsic absurdity of their argument. He showed them that it might as well be applied to them as to him. Your disciples, taught by you, and encouraged by you, pretend to cast out devils. If your argument be true that a man who casts out devils must be in league with the devil, then your disciples have made a covenant with him also. You must therefore either give up this argument, or admit that the working of miracles is proof of the assistance of God.

The words of Christ, here, do not prove that they had actually the power of casting out devils, but only that they claimed it, and practised magic or jugglery. See Acts xix. 13. ¶ *Your children.* Your disciples, or followers. Note, Matt. i. 1. ¶ *They shall be your judges.* They shall condemn you and your argument. They

the Spirit of God, then the kingdom<sup>3</sup> of God is come unto you.

29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil<sup>4</sup> his goods, except he first bind the strong man ? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me is against me ;<sup>5</sup> and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. vi. 33. Dan. ii. 44. Luke xi. 20 ; xvii. 21. Rom. xiv. 17. <sup>4</sup> Isa. xlix. 24 ; lili. 12. Rev. xii. 7—10 ; xx. 2, 3. <sup>5</sup> 1 John ii. 19.

are conclusive witnesses against the force of your reasoning.

28. *But if I, by the Spirit of God, &c.* The *Spirit of God*, here, means the power of God—in Luke, by the finger of God. Compare Exod. viii. 19. Psa. viii. 3. If this work is not by the aid of Satan, then it is by the aid of God. Then his kingdom, or reign, is come. Matt. iii. 2. The reign of Satan over men, and the reign of God, are in opposition. If God expels Satan from his dominion over men, then his reign has come.

29. *Or else, &c.* He takes a new illustration to confute the Pharisees, drawn from breaking into a house. A man could not break into the house of a strong man, and take his property, unless he had rendered the man himself helpless. If he had taken his goods, it would therefore be sufficient proof that he had bound the man. So I, says he, have taken this property—this possessed person—from the dominion of Satan. It is clear proof that I have subdued Satan himself, the strong being that had him in possession. The words, *or else*, mean, or how. How, or in what way, can one, &c. ¶ *Spoil his goods.* The word *spoil* commonly means now, to corrupt, injure, or destroy. Here it means to plunder, to take with violence, as it commonly does in the Bible. See Exod. iii. 22 ; Col. ii. 8, 15.

30. *He that is not with me, &c.* In addition to his other arguments, he urges this general principle, that there could be but two parties in the universe. If any one did not act with him, he was against him. If he gathered not with him, he scattered. This is taken from the practice of persons in harvest. He that did not

31 ¶ Wherefore I say unto you, <sup>1</sup> *all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.*

Mark iii. 28. Luke xii. 10. <sup>2</sup> Heb. x. 29. John v. 16.

her with him, or aid him, scattered road, or opposed him. The application of this was: As I have not united with him, but opposed him, there can be no league between us. The charge, therefore, is a false one.

31, 32. In this place, and in Mark iii. —30, Jesus states the awful nature of the sin of which they had been guilty. That sin was the sin against the Holy Ghost. It consisted in charging Jesus with being in league with the devil, or accusing him of working his miracles, not by the Spirit or power of God, but by the aid of the Prince of the devils. It was therefore a direct insult, abuse, or evil speaking, against the Holy Ghost—the Spirit by which Jesus worked his miracles. That was what he intended by this, at that time, is clear from Mark iii. 1, “Because they said he had an unclean spirit.” All other sins—all speaking against the Saviour himself—might be forgiven. But this sin was clearly against the Holy One; it was alleging that the Ghost displays of God’s mercy and power were the work of the devil; and argued, therefore, the highest depravity of mind. The sin of which he speaks is, then, clearly stated. It was accusing him of working miracles by the aid of the devil thus dishonouring the Holy Ghost. *All manner of sin—shall be forgiven.* That is, only on condition that men repent and believe. If they continue in this sin, they cannot be forgiven. Mark xvi. 16. Rom. ii. 6—9. ¶ *Blasphemy.* Injurious evil speaking of God. See Note, Matt.

3. ¶ *A word against the Son of man.* The Jews were offended at the humble birth and appearance of the Saviour. They reproached him as being a Nazarene—coming from Nazareth, a place from which no good was expected to proceed; with being a Galilean, from Galilee, a place from which no prophet came. John vii. 52. Jesus says that reproaches of this

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man,<sup>3</sup> it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

<sup>3</sup> Luke vii. 34. John vii. 12. 1 Tim. i. 13.

kind could be pardoned. Reflections on his poverty, his humble birth, and the lowliness of his human nature, might be forgiven. But for those which affected his divine nature, accusing him of being in league with the devil, denying his divinity, and attributing the power which manifestly implied divinity to the Prince of fallen spirits, there could be no pardon. This sin was a very different thing from what is now often supposed to be the sin against the Holy Ghost. It was a wanton and blasphemous attack on the divine power and nature of Christ. Such a sin God would not forgive. ¶ *Speaketh against the Holy Ghost.* This probably refers to the divine nature of Christ—the power by which he wrought his miracles. There is no evidence that it refers to the third person of the Trinity. The word *ghost* means spirit, and probably means the divine nature or spirit with which the man Jesus was endowed. And the meaning of the whole passage may be: He that speaks against me as a man of Nazareth—that speaks contemptuously of my humble birth, &c. may be pardoned. But he that reproaches my divine character, charging it as being in league with Satan, and blaspheming the power of God manifestly displayed by me, can never obtain forgiveness. ¶ *Neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.* That is, as Mark expresses it, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation. This fixes the meaning of the phrase. It means, then, not the future age or dispensation, known among the Jews as the world to come, but it means that the guilt will be unpardonable for ever; that such is the purpose of God, that he will not forgive a sin so direct, presumptuous, and awful. It cannot be inferred from this that any sins will be forgiven in hell. He meant simply to say that there were no possible circumstances in which the offender could find forgive-

38 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good ; <sup>1</sup> or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt : for <sup>2</sup> the tree is known by *his* fruit.

<sup>3</sup> 34 O generation <sup>3</sup> of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things ? for out <sup>4</sup> of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth

good things : and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account <sup>5</sup> thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words <sup>6</sup> thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 ¶ Then certain of the scribes

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxiii. 26. Luke xi. 39, 40. Jas. iv. 8. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 16, 17. <sup>3</sup> Ch. iii. 7. <sup>4</sup> Luke vi. 45.

<sup>5</sup> Eccl. xii. 14. Eph. v. 4, 6. Jude 15. <sup>6</sup> Prov. xiii. 3.

ness. He certainly did not say that any sin unpardoned here would be pardoned hereafter.

33. *Either make, &c.* The fact asserted in this verse is, that a tree is known, not by its leaves, or bark, or form, but by its fruit. The application to the argument is this: You are to judge of man's being in league with Satan by his works. If my doctrines and works be properly the works of Satan, then I am corrupt: if not, then your charge is blasphemy. So, on the other hand, if, notwithstanding your professions, your works are the works of the devil, and your doctrines be such as he would teach, it would prove respecting you that which you charge on me. In this indirect but powerful manner, Jesus advances to the charge against them, which he urges in the following verses.

34, 35. *O generation of vipers!* Christ here applies the argument which he had suggested in the previous verse. They were a wicked race; like poisonous reptiles, with a corrupt and evil nature. They could not be expected to speak good things—that is, to speak favourably of him and his works. As the bad fruit of a tree was the proper effect of its nature, so were their words about him and his works the proper effect of their nature. The abundance or fulness of the heart produced the words of the lips. ¶ *Vipers.* These are a poisonous kind of serpents, less than a yard long, and about an inch thick, having a flat head. The males have two large teeth, through which a most deadly poison is thrown into the wound made by their bite. They

are an emblem of malignity and mischief. These were strong expressions to be used by the meek and lowly Jesus; but they were not the effect of anger and malice; they were a description of the true character of the men with whom he was conversing—a description most justly deserved. Note, Matt. iii. 7.

36. *But I say unto you, &c.* Christ closes this address to his malignant and wicked hearers by a solemn declaration that for these things God would bring them into judgment. They, therefore, who had spoken so malignantly against him, could not escape. ¶ *Idle word.* This literally means a vain, thoughtless, useless word, a word that accomplishes no good. Here *idle* means evidently, wicked, and injurious, false and malicious; for such were the words which they had spoken.

37. *By thy words thou shalt be justified &c.* That is, words shall be the indication of the true principles of the heart; by words the heart shall be known, as the tree is by its fruit. If they are true, proper, chaste, instructive, pious, they will prove that the heart is right. If false, envious, malignant, and impious, they will prove that the heart is wrong, and will therefore be among the causes of condemnation. It is not meant that words will be the only thing that will condemn man; but that they will be an important part of the things for which he shall be condemned. See Jas. iii. 3—12.

38—42. *We would see a sign from thee.* See Luke xi. 16, 29—32. A sign commonly signifies a miracle; that is, a sign that God was with the person, or had

and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign<sup>1</sup> from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous<sup>2</sup> generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 1. 1 Cor. i. 22. <sup>2</sup> Isa. lvi. 3.

sent him. Compare Note on Isa. vii. 11. Luke adds that this was done tempting him, trying him, doubting if he had the power to do it. If these persons had been present with him for any considerable time, they had already seen sufficient proofs that he was what he pretended. They might have been, however, those who had recently come; and then the emphasis must be laid on *we*. We, as well as the others, would see a proof that thou art the Christ. In either case it was a temptation. If they had not seen him work a miracle, yet they should have believed it by testimony. Compare John xx. 29. Perhaps the emphasis is to be laid on the words *from heaven*. Luke xi. 16. They might profess not to doubt that his miracles were real, but they were not quite satisfactory. They were desirous of seeing something, therefore, that should clear up their doubts, where there could be no opportunity for dispute. A comet, or lightning, or thunder, or sudden darkness, or the gift of food raining upon them, they supposed would be decisive. Perhaps they referred in this to Moses. He had been with God amidst thunders and lightnings; and he had given them manna, bread from heaven, to eat. They wished Jesus to show some miracle equally undoubted.

39. *An evil and adulterous generation.* The relation of the Jews to God was often represented as a marriage contract; God as the husband, and the Jewish people as the wife. See Isa. lvi. 1. Ezek. xvi. 15. Hos. iii. 1. Hence their apostasy and idolatry are often represented as adultery. This is the meaning, probably, here. They were evil, and unfaithful to the covenant or to the commandments of God—an apostate and corrupt people. There is, however, evidence that they were literally an adulterous people. *There shall no sign be given to it, &c.* They sought some direct

it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 For<sup>3</sup> as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

<sup>3</sup> Jonah i. 17.

miracle from heaven. He replied that no such miracle should be given. He did not mean to say that he would work no more miracles, or give no more evidence that he was the Christ; but he would give no such miracle as they required. He would give one that ought to be as satisfactory evidence to them that he was from God, as the miraculous preservation of Jonah was to the Ninevites that he was divinely commissioned. As Jonah was preserved three days by miracle, and then restored alive, so he would be raised from the dead after three days. As on the ground of this preservation the Ninevites believed Jonah and repented, so on the ground of his resurrection the men of an adulterous and wicked generation ought to repent, and believe that he was from God. *The sign of the prophet Jonas* means the sign or evidence which was given to the people of Nineveh that he was from God; to wit, that he had been miraculously preserved, and was therefore divinely commissioned. The word Jonas is the Greek way of writing the Hebrew word Jonah, as Elias is for Elijah.

40. *For as Jonas was three days, &c.* See Jonah i. 17. This event took place, in the Mediterranean sea, somewhere between Joppa and Tarshish, when the prophet was fleeing from Nineveh. It is said that the whale seldom passes into that sea, and that its throat is too small to admit a man. It is probable, therefore, that a fish of the shark kind is intended. Sharks have been known often to swallow a man entire. The fish in the book of Jonah is described merely as a *great fish*, without specifying the kind. It is well known that the Greek word translated *whale*, in the New Testament, does not of necessity mean a whale, but may denote a large fish of any kind.

40. *Three days and three nights.* It will be seen in the account of the resurrec-



41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment <sup>1</sup> with this generation, and shall condemn <sup>2</sup> it: because they repented at <sup>3</sup> the preach-

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xvi. 51, 52. Rom. ii. 27. Heb. xi. 7.  
<sup>2</sup> Rom. ii. 27. <sup>3</sup> Jonah iii. 5.

tion of Christ, that he was in the grave but two nights and a part of three days. See Matt. xxviii. 6. This computation is, however, strictly in accordance with the Jewish mode of reckoning. If it had not been, the Jews would have understood it, and would have charged our Saviour as being a false prophet; for it was well known to them that he had spoken this prophecy. Matt. xxvii. 63. Such a charge, however, was never made; and it is plain, therefore, that what was meant by the prediction was accomplished. It was a maxim, also, among the Jews, in computing time, that a part of a day was to be received as the whole. Many instances of this kind occur in both sacred and profane history. See Gen. xlii. 17, 18. 2 Chron. x. 5, 12. Compare Est. iv. 16, with v. 1. ¶ *In the heart of the earth.* The Jews used the word *heart* to denote the interior of a thing, or to speak of being in a thing. It means, here, to be in the grave or sepulchre.

41. *The men of Nineveh.* Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian empire. It was founded by Ashur. Gen. x. 11. It was situated on the banks of the river Tigris, to the north-east of Babylon. It is now so completely destroyed that geographers are unable to ascertain whether it was on the eastern or western bank. It was a city of vast extent, and of corresponding wickedness. It was forty-eight miles in circuit; its walls were one hundred feet high, and ten thick, and were defended by fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet in height. It contained in the time of Jonah, it is supposed, six hundred thousand inhabitants. The destruction of Nineveh, threatened by Jonah in forty days, was suspended, by their repentance, two hundred years. It was then overthrown by the Babylonians, about six hundred years before Christ. During the siege, a mighty inundation of the river Tigris took place, which threw down a part of the walls, through which the enemy entered, and sacked and destroyed the city. This destruction had been fore-

ing of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

42 The <sup>4</sup>queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this

<sup>4</sup> Luke xi. 31.

told one hundred and fifteen years before, by Nahum, ch. i. 8: "But with an overwhelming flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof." And, ch. ii. 6: "The gates of the river shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved." The place is completely destroyed, the very situation is unknown.\* If it seem strange that ancient cities are so completely destroyed that no remains of brick or stone are to be found, it should be remembered that they were built of clay dried only in the sun, and not burned; that frequent rains softened the clay; and that the mighty walls and dwellings, in the lapse of ages, would sink down into an undistinguished heap of ruins. ¶ *Shall condemn it.* That is, their conduct, in repenting at Jonah's prediction, shall condemn this generation. They, ignorant and wicked heathen, repented when threatened with temporal judgment by a mere man—Jonah; you, Jews, professing to be enlightened, though threatened for your great wickedness with eternal punishment by the Son of God—a far greater being than Jonah—repent not, and must therefore meet with a far heavier condemnation.

42. *The queen of the south.* That is, the queen of Sheba, 1 Kin. x. 1. Sheba was probably a city of Arabia, situated to the south of Judea. Compare Notes on Isa. lx. 6. ¶ *From the uttermost parts of the earth.* This means simply from the most distant parts of the habitable world then known. See a similar expression in Deut. xxviii. 49. As the knowledge of geography was limited, the place was, in fact, by no means in the extreme parts of the earth. It means that she came from a remote country; and she would condemn that generation, for she came a great distance to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and the Jews of that age would not listen to the wisdom of one much greater than Solomon, though he was present with them.

\* Since this was written, Layard's researches have brought the probable site of Nineveh within our knowledge.—Editor.

generation, and shall condemn it: for she <sup>1</sup> came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

43 When <sup>2</sup> the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he <sup>3</sup> walketh

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. ix. 1. <sup>2</sup> Luke xi. 24. <sup>3</sup> Job i. 7. 1 Pet. v. 8.

43—45. *When the unclean spirit, &c.* The general sentiment which our Saviour here teaches, is much more easily understood than the illustration which he uses. The Jews had asked a sign from heaven but should decisively prove that he was he Messiah, and satisfy their unbelief. He replies that though he should give them such a sign—a proof conclusive and satisfactory; and though for a time they should profess to believe, and apparently reform, yet such was the obstinacy of their unbelief and wickedness, that they would soon return to them, and become worse and worse. Infidelity and wickedness, like an evil spirit in a possessed man, were appropriately at home. If they be driven out, they find no other place so comfortable and undisturbed as the bosom from whence they have been expelled. Everywhere they would be comparatively like an evil spirit going through deserts and lonely places, and finding no place of rest. They would return, therefore, and dwell in that bosom again. ¶ *He walketh through dry places.* That is, through deserts—regions of country unwatered, arid, barren, desolate. That our Saviour here speaks according to the ancient fictions of the Jews, that evil spirits had their abodes in those desolate, uninhabited regions, there can be no doubt. Nor can there be any doubt that the Bible gives countenance to the opinion. Thus Rev. viii. 2: Babylon “is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit;” that is, has become desolate—a place where evil spirits appropriately dwell. So Isa. xiii. 21: “And satyrs shall dance there;” i. e. according to the ancient Greek translation, “Devils or demons, shall dance there.” See also Deut. xxxii. 17. Jer. i. 39. Compare Note on Isa. xxxiv. 14. ¶ *Seeking rest, and findeth none.* Thus desolate and dry regions are represented as uncomfortable

through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 ‘Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh

habitations; so much so, that the dissatisfied spirit, better pleased with a dwelling in the bosom of men, as affording an opportunity of doing evil, seeks to return thither.

44. *Then he saith, I will return into my house, &c.* The man is called his house, because he had been the place where the spirit had dwelt. ¶ *He findeth it empty, &c.* The reference to the dwelling of the spirit in men is continued. The bosom is called his house. By the absence of the evil spirit, the house is represented as unoccupied, or empty, swept and garnished; that is, while the evil spirit was away, the bosom was freed from his wicked influence. ¶ *Garnished.* Adorned, put in order, furnished. Applied to the man, it means that his mind was sane and regular when the evil spirit was gone, or, he had a lucid interval.

45. *Then he goeth, &c.* Seeing the state of the man, and dissatisfied with a lonely dwelling in the desert where he could do no evil, envious also of the happiness of the individual, and supremely bent on evil, he resolved to increase his power of malignant influences, and return. He is therefore represented as taking seven other spirits still worse, and returning to his former habitation. Seven denotes a large but indefinite number. It was a favourite number with the Jews, and was used to denote completeness or perfection, or any finished or complete number. See 1 Sam. ii. 5. Comp. Rev. i. 4. Here it means a sufficient number completely to occupy and harass his soul. ¶ *Even so shall it be with this generation.* This shows the scope and design of this illustration. The state of that man was a representation of that generation of men. Much might be done to cure their unbelief; much to reform them externally; but such was the firm hold which the principles of infidelity and wickedness

with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse<sup>1</sup> than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

46 ¶ While he yet talked to the people, behold, his<sup>2</sup> mother and his

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vi. 4; x. 26. <sup>2</sup> Pet. ii. 20, 22. <sup>3</sup> Mark iii. 31—35. Luke viii. 19—21.

had taken of their minds as their proper habitation, that they would return, after all the means used to reform them, and the people would be worse and worse. And this was literally accomplished. After all the instructions and miracles of the Saviour and his apostles; after all that had been done for them by holy men and prophets, and by the judgments and mercies of God; and after all their external temporary reformati—like the temporary departure of an evil spirit from a man possessed—yet such was their love of wickedness, that the nation became worse and worse. They increased in crime, like the seven-fold misery and wretchedness of the man into whose bosom the seven additional evil spirits came. They rejected God's messengers, abused his mercies, crucified his Son, and God gave their temple, and capital, and nation, into the hands of the Romans, and thousands of the people to destruction.

It is not proved, by this passage, that evil spirits actually dwell in deserts. It is proved only that such was the opinion of the Jews; that it was drawn from some expressions in the Bible; and that such expressions were sufficiently clear to justify our Saviour in drawing an argument from them to confound those who firmly believed that such was the case. There is not, however, any absurdity in the opinion. For, 1. There are evil spirits. See Notes on ch. viii. 33. 2. They must exist in some place. 3. There is as much propriety that they should be located about our earth as any where. 4. The clear doctrine of the Bible is, that many of them have much to do with our world. 5. It is as reasonable that they should dwell commonly in desolate and uninhabited regions as any where else.

46—50. See also Mark iii. 31—35. Luke viii. 19—21. ¶ *His brethren.*

brethren<sup>3</sup> stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xiii. 55.

There has been some difference of opinion about the persons who were meant here; some supposing that they were children of Mary his mother, others that they were the children of Mary the wife of Cleophas or Alpheus his cousins, and called brethren according to the customs of the Jews. The natural and obvious meaning is, however, that they were the children of Mary his mother. See also Mark vi. 3. To this opinion, moreover, there can be no valid objection.

48. *Who is my mother?* &c. There was no want of affection or respect in Jesus towards his mother, as is proved by his whole life. See especially Luke ii. 51, and John xix. 25—27. This question was asked merely to fix the attention of the hearers, and to prepare them for the answer—that is, to show them who sustained towards him the nearest and most tender relation. To do this he pointed to his disciples. Dear and tender as were the ties which bound him to his mother and brethren, yet those which bound him to his disciples were more tender and sacred. How great was his love for his disciples, when it was more than even that for his mother! And what a bright illustration of his own doctrine, that we ought to forsake father and mother, and friends, and houses, and lands, to be his followers.

#### REMARKS.

I. Our Saviour has taught us the right use of the sabbath. Ver. 1—13. His conduct was an explanation of the meaning of the fourth commandment. By his example we may learn what may be done. He himself performed only those works on the sabbath which were strictly necessary for life, and those which went to benefit the poor, the afflicted, and needy. Whatever work is done on the sabbath that is not for these ends, must

my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 2, 10; xx. 17—20.

e wrong. All labour that can as well be done on another day, all which is not for the support of life, or to aid the ignorant, poor, and sick, must be wrong. This sample justifies teaching the ignorant, applying the wants of the poor, instructing children in the precepts of religion, teaching those to read in sabbath schools who have no other opportunity for learning, and visiting the sick, when we go not for formality, or to save time on some other day, but to do them good.

II. The sabbath is of vast service to mankind. It was made for man, not for man to violate or profane, or to be merely idle, but to improve to his spiritual and eternal good. Where men are employed through six days in worldly occupations, it is kind towards them to give them one day particularly to prepare for eternity. Where there is no sabbath there is no religion. There are no schools for instructing the poor. There are no means of enlightening the ignorant. This truth, from the history of the world, will bear to be recorded in letters of gold that the true religion will exist among men only when they strictly observe the sabbath. They, therefore, who do most to promote the observance of the sabbath, are doing most for religion and the welfare of man. In this respect, Sunday school teachers may do more, perhaps, than all the world besides, for the best interests of the world.

III. In the conduct of Christ, ver. 14, 15, we have an example of Christian prudence. He did not throw himself needlessly into danger. He did not remain to provoke opposition. He felt that his time was not come, and that his life, by a prudent course, should be preserved. He therefore withdrew. Religion requires us to sacrifice our lives rather than deny the Saviour. To throw our lives away, when with good conscience they might be preserved, is self-murder.

IV. The rejection of the gospel in one place is often the occasion of its being received elsewhere. Ver. 15. Men may reject it to their own destruction; but

50 For whosoever shall do the will<sup>2</sup> of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 20. John xv. 14. Gal. v. 6. Heb. ii. 11. 1 John ii. 17.

somewhere it will be preached, and will be the power of God unto salvation. The wicked cannot drive it out of the world. They only secure their own ruin, and, against their will, benefit and save others. To reject it is like turning a beautiful and fertilizing stream from a man's own land. He does not, he cannot dry it up. It will flow somewhere else. He injures himself, and perhaps benefits multitudes. Men never commit so great foolishness and wickedness, and so completely fail in what they aim at, as in rejecting the gospel. A man, hating the light of the sun, might get into a cave or dungeon, and be in total darkness; but the sun will continue to shine, and millions, in spite of him, will be benefited by it. So it is with the gospel.

V. Christ was mild, still, retiring—not clamorous or noisy. Ver. 19. So is all religion. There is no piety in noise; if there was, then thunder and artillery would be piety. Confusion and discord are not religion. Loud words and shouting are not religion. Religion is love, reverence, fear, holiness, deep and awful regard for the presence of God, profound apprehensions of the solemnities of eternity, imitation of the Saviour. It is still. It is full of awe—an awe too great to strive, or cry, or lift up the voice in the streets. If men ever should be overawed, and filled with emotions repressing noise and clamour, it should be when they approach the great God. This great truth is the essence of religion, that we have most of it when we come nearest in all things to the Lord Jesus Christ.

VI. The feeble may trust in Jesus. Ver. 20. A child of any age, an ignorant person, the poorest man, may come, and he shall in nowise be cast out. It is a sense of our weakness that Jesus seeks. Where that is, he will strengthen us, and we shall not fail.

VII. Grace shall not be extinguished. Ver. 20. Jesus, where he finds it in the feeblest degree, will not destroy it. He will cherish it. He will kindle it to a

CHAPTER XIII.

*Parable of the sower, 1—9. Why Jesus used parables, 10—17; 34, 35. Parable of sower explained, 18—23. Parable of the tares, 24—30. Mustard seed, 31, 32. Leaven, 33. Parable of the tares explained, 36—43.*

flame. It shall burn brighter and brighter, till it "glows with the pure spirits above."

VIII. Men are greatly prone to ascribe all religion to the devil. Ver. 24. Any thing that is unusual, any thing that confounds them, anything that troubles their consciences, they ascribe to fanaticism, overheated zeal, and Satan. It has always been so. It is sometimes an easy way to stifle their own convictions, and to bring religion into contempt. Somehow or other, like the Pharisees, infidels must account for revivals of religion, for striking instances of conversion, and for the great and undeniable effects which the gospel produces. How easy to say that it is delusion, and that it is the work of the devil! How easy to show at once the terrible opposition of their own hearts to God, and to boast themselves, in their own wisdom, in having found a cause so simple for all the effects which religion produces in the world! How much pains, also, men will take to secure their own perdition, rather than to admit it to be possible that Christianity should be true!

IX. We see the danger of blasphemy—the danger of trifling with the influences of the Holy Spirit. Ver. 31, 32. Even if we do not commit the unpardonable sin, yet we see that all trifling with the Holy Ghost is a sin very near to God, and attended with infinite danger. He that laughs away the thoughts of death and eternity; he that seeks the society of the gay and trifling, or of the sensual and profane, for the express purpose of driving away these thoughts; and he that struggles directly against his convictions, and is resolved that he will not submit to God, may be, for aught he knows, making his damnation sure. Why should God ever return, when he has once rejected the gospel? Who would be to blame if the sinner is then lost? Assuredly not God. None but himself. Children sometimes do this. Then is the time, the very time, when they should begin to love God and Jesus Christ. Then the Spirit also strives.

*Parables—Treasure, 44. Pearl, 45, 46. Net, 47—50. Offence at Christ's teaching, 53—58.*

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

Many have then given their hearts to him, and become Christians. Many more might have done so, if they had not grieved away the Spirit of God.

X. We see the danger of rejecting Christ. Ver. 38—42. All past ages, all the wicked and the good, the foolish and the wise, will rise up in the day of judgment and condemn us, if we do not believe the gospel. No people, heretofore, have seen so much light as we do in this age. And no people can be so awfully condemned as those who, in a land of light, of sabbaths, and sabbath schools, reject Christ and go to hell. Among the hundred and twenty thousand children of Nineveh, Jonah iv. 11, there was not one single Sunday school. There was no one to tell them of God and the Saviour. They have died and gone to judgment. Children now living, will die also, and go to meet them in the day of judgment. How will they condemn the children of this age, if they do not love the Lord Jesus Christ!

XI. Sinners, when awakened, if they grieve away the Spirit of God, become worse than before. Ver. 43—45. They are never as they were. Their hearts are hard, their consciences are seared, they hate religious men, and they plunge deeper and deeper into sin. Seven devils often dwell where one did; and God gives the man over to blindness of mind and hardness of heart. This shows, also, the great guilt and danger of grieving the Holy Ghost.

XII. We see the love of Christ for his followers. Ver. 46—50. Much as he loved his mother, yet he loved his disciples more. He still loves them. He will always love them. His heart is full of affection for them. And though they be poor and despised, and unknown to the rich and mighty, yet to Jesus they are still dearer than mother, and sisters, and brothers.

CHAPTER XIII.

1, 2. *The sea-side.* This was the sea of Tiberias. The multitude stood on the

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship,<sup>1</sup> and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things

<sup>1</sup> Luke v. 3.

shore near to him, so that he could be easily heard. He went into a ship—that is, a boat—and sat down to address them. Few spectacles could be more interesting than a vast crowd, on the banks of a smooth and tranquil sea—an emblem of his instructions—and the Son of God addressing them on the great interests of eternity.

3—9. *In parables.* The word *parable* is derived from a Greek word signifying to compare together, and denotes a similitude taken from a natural object, to illustrate a spiritual or moral subject. It is a narrative of some fictitious or real event, in order to illustrate more clearly some truth that the speaker wished to communicate. In early ages the parable was much used. Heutheon writers, as *Æsop*, often employed it. In the time of Christ it was common. The prophets had used it, and Christ employed it often in teaching his disciples. It is not necessary to suppose that the narratives were strictly true. The main thing—the inculcation of spiritual truth—was gained equally, whether the case in the parable was true, or supposed. Nor was there any dishonesty in this. 'It was well understood. No person was deceived. The speaker was not understood to affirm the thing literally narrated, but only to fix the attention more firmly on the moral truth that he presented. The design of speaking in parables was the following: 1. To convey truth to the mind in a more interesting manner; adding to the truth conveyed the beauty of a lovely image or narrative. 2. To teach spiritual truth so as to arrest the attention of ignorant people, making an appeal to them through the senses. 3. To convey some offensive truth, some pointed personal rebuke, in such a way as to bring it home to the conscience. Of this kind was the parable which Nathan delivered to David,<sup>2</sup> Sam. xii. 1—7, and many of our Saviour's parables addressed to the Jews. 4. To conceal from one part of his audience truths which he intended others should under-

stand. Thus Christ often, by this means, delivered truths to his disciples in the presence of the Jews, which he well knew the Jews would not understand; truths pertaining to them particularly, and which he was under no obligations to explain to the Jews. See Matt. xiii. 13—16. Mark iv. 33.

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:  
5 Some fell upon stony places,

<sup>2</sup> Mark iv. 2. Luke viii. 5—8.

Our Saviour's parables are distinguished above all others for clearness, purity, chasteness, intelligibility, importance of instruction, and simplicity. They are taken mostly from the affairs of common life, and intelligible, therefore, to all men. They contain much of himself, his doctrine, life, design in coming, and claims; and are therefore, of importance to all men; and they are given in a style of native simplicity intelligible to the child, yet instructive to men of every rank and age. In his parables, as in all his instructions, Jesus excelled all men in the purity, importance, and sublimity of his doctrine.

3. *A sower went forth to sow.* The image here is taken from an employment known to all men, and therefore intelligible to all. Nor can there be a more striking illustration of preaching the gospel than placing the seed in the ground to spring up hereafter, and bear fruit. ¶ *Sower.* One who sows or scatters seed. A farmer. It is not improbable that one was near the Saviour when he spoke this parable.

4. *Some seeds fell by the way-side.* That is, the hard path or leadland, which the plough had not touched, and where there was no opportunity for it to sink into the earth.

5. *Stony places.* Where there was little earth, but where it was hard and rocky; so that the roots could not strike down into the earth for sufficient moisture to support the plant. When the sun became hot, they of course withered away. They spring up the sooner because there was little earth to cover them.

where they had not much earth : and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth :

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched ; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns ; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them :

8 But other fell into good ground,<sup>1</sup> and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cxix. 59.

¶ *Forthwith.* Immediately. Not that they sprouted and grew any quicker or faster than the others, but they were not so long in reaching the surface. Having little root, they soon withered away.

7. *Among thorns.* That is, in a part of the field where the thorns and shrubs had been imperfectly cleared away, and not destroyed. They grew with the grain, crowded it, shaded it, exhausted the earth, and thus choked it.

8. *Into good ground.* The fertile and rich soil. In sowing, by far the largest proportion of seed will fall into the good soil ; but Christ did not intend to teach that these proportions would be exactly the same among those who heard the gospel. Parables are designed to teach some general truth ; and the circumstances should not be pressed too much in explaining them. ¶ *An hundred fold, &c.* That is, a hundred, sixty, or thirty grains, for each one that was sowed ; an increase by no means uncommon. Some grains of wheat will produce twelve or fifteen hundred grains. The usual proportion on a field sown, however, is not more than twenty, fifty, or sixty bushels for one.

9. *Who hath ears, &c.* This is a proverbial expression, implying that it was every man's duty to pay attention to what was spoken. Matt. xi. 15.

10—17. Christ, in these verses, gives a reason why he used this manner of instruction. See also Mark iv. 10—12 ; Luke viii. 9, 10.

11. *The mysteries of the kingdom.*

9 Who<sup>2</sup> hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables ?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to<sup>3</sup> know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 For<sup>4</sup> whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 15.    <sup>3</sup> Ch. xi. 25.    Mark iv. 11.  
1 Cor. ii. 10, 14.    Eph. i. 9, 18 ; iii. 2.    Col. i. 26, 27.    1 John ii. 27.    <sup>4</sup> Ch. xxv. 29.    Luke ix. 26.

The word *mystery*, in the Bible, properly means a thing that is concealed, or that has been concealed. It does not mean that the thing was incomprehensible, or even difficult to be understood. The thing might be plain enough if revealed, but it means simply that it had not been made known. Thus the mysteries of the kingdom do not mean any doctrines incomprehensible in themselves considered, but simply doctrines about the preaching of the gospel, and the establishment of the new kingdom of the Messiah which had not been understood, and which were as yet concealed from the great body of the Jews. See Rom. xi. 25 ; xvi. 25. Eph. iii. 3, 4, 9. Of this nature was the truth that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles, that the Jewish polity was to cease, that the Messiah was to die, &c. To the disciples it was given to know these truths. It was important for them, as they were to carry the gospel around the globe. To the others it was not then given. They were too gross, too earthly ; they had too grovelling conceptions of the Messiah's kingdom to understand these truths, even if presented. They were not to preach it, and hence our Saviour was at particular pains to instruct his apostles. The Pharisees, and Jews generally, were not prepared for it, and would not have believed it, and therefore he purposely employed a kind of teaching that they did not understand.

12. *Whosoever hath, &c.* This is a proverbial mode of speaking. It means

more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias,<sup>1</sup> which saith,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. vi. 9.

that a man who improves what light, grace, and opportunities he has, shall have them increased. From him that improves them not, it is proper that they should be taken away. The Jews had many opportunities of learning the truth, and some light still lingered among them. But they were gross and sensual, and misimproved them, and it was a just judgment that they should be deprived of them. Superior knowledge was given to the disciples of Christ; they improved it, however slowly, and the promise was that it should be greatly increased.

13. *Because they seeing, see not.* Mark, ch. iv. 12, and Luke, ch. viii. 10, say, "That seeing, they may not see," &c. But there is no difference. Matthew simply states the fact, that though they saw the natural meaning of the story—though they literally understood the parable—yet they did not understand its spiritual signification. Mark and Luke do not state the fact, but affirm that he spoke with this intention, implying that such was the result. Nor was there any dishonesty in this, or any unfair disguise. He had truths to state which he wished his disciples particularly to understand. They were of great importance to their ministry. Had he clearly and fully stated them to the Jews, they would have taken his life long before they did. He therefore chose to state the doctrines so that if their hearts had been right, and if they had not been malignant and blind, they might have understood them. His doctrines he stated in the best possible way; and it was not his fault if people did not understand him. By little and little, in this way, he prepared many even of the Jews to receive the truth when it was proposed by the only possible way of ever gaining access to their minds. It was,

By<sup>2</sup> hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull<sup>3</sup> of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xli. 2. John xlii. 40. Acts xxviii. 26, 27. Rom. xi. 8. 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15. <sup>3</sup> Heb. v. 11.

moreover, entirely proper and right to impart instruction to his disciples, which he did not intend for others.

14. *And in them is fulfilled, &c.* This place is quoted substantially from Isa. vi. 9, 10. It was literally fulfilled in the time of Isaiah. In the time of Christ the people had the same character. Like them, they closed their eyes upon the truth, and rejected the divine teaching. The words of Isaiah were therefore as well fitted to express the character of the people in the time of Christ, as in that of the prophet. In this sense they were *fulfilled*, or filled up, or a case occurred that corresponded to their meaning. See Note on Matt. i. 22. It is not by any means intended that Isaiah, when he spoke these words, had any reference to the time of Christ. The meaning in both places is, that the people were so gross, sensual, and prejudiced, that they would not see the truth, or understand any thing that was contrary to their grovelling opinions and sensual desires; a case by no means uncommon in the world. See the passage more fully explained in my Notes on Isa. vi. ¶ *Waxed gross.* Literally, *has become fat.* It is commonly applied to the body, but is also used to denote one who is stupid and foolish in mind. Here it means that the people were so sensual and corrupt, that they did not see or understand the pure spiritual principles of the gospel. ¶ *Lest they should see, &c.* Lest they should see their lost condition as sinners, and turn and live. The reason given here why they did not hear and understand the gospel, is, that their heart was wrong. They would not attend to the things that make for their peace. ¶ *I should heal them.* Should pardon, sanctify, and save them. Sin is often represented as a disease, and the pardon



understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But <sup>1</sup> blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, That <sup>2</sup> many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 17. Luke x. 23, 24. John xx. 29.  
<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. iii. 5, 6. Heb. xi. 13.  
 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

and recovery of the soul from sin as healing.

16. *Blessed are your eyes, &c.* That is, you are happy that you are permitted to see truth which they will not see. You are permitted to understand the spiritual meaning of the parables, and in some degree the plan of salvation.

17. *Many prophets and righteous men, &c.* They wished to see the time of the Messiah. They looked to it as a time when the hopes of the world would be fulfilled, and the just be happy. See John viii. 56. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." So Isaiah and the prophets look forward to the coming of the Messiah as the consummation of their wishes, and the end of the prophecies. Rev. xix. 10. The object always dearest to the hearts of all righteous men is, to witness the coming and advancement of the kingdom of Christ. See also Heb. xi. 13. 1 Pet. i. 10—12.

18—23. See also Mark iv. 13—20. Luke viii. 11—15. *Hear ye, therefore, the parable of the sower.* That is, hear the explanation, or spiritual meaning of the narrative given before. Mark adds, ch. iv. 13, "Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?" By which it seems that he regarded this as one of the simplest and plainest of them, and gave an explanation of it that they might understand the general principles of interpreting them.

19. *When any one heareth, &c.* The

18 ¶ Hear <sup>3</sup> ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word <sup>4</sup> of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked <sup>5</sup> one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy <sup>6</sup> receiveth it;

<sup>3</sup> Mark iv. 14—20. Luke viii. 11—15. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iv. 23.  
<sup>5</sup> 1 John ii. 13, 14; iii. 12. <sup>6</sup> Isa. lviii. 2. Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. John v. 35. Gal. iv. 15.

seed represents the word of God communicated in any manner to the minds of men, by the scriptures, by preaching, by acts of Providence, or by the direct influence of the Holy Spirit. ¶ *Then cometh the wicked one.* That is, Satan, Mark iv. 15, or the devil, Luke viii. 12;—the one eminently wicked, the accuser, the tempter. He is represented by the fowls that came and picked up the seed by the way-side. The gospel is preached to men hardened in sin. It makes no impression. It lies like seed in the hard path; it is easily taken away, and never suffered to take root.

20. *In stony places.* Jesus explains this as denoting those who hear the gospel; who are caught with it as something new or pleasing; who profess themselves greatly delighted with it, and who are full of zeal for it. Yet they have no root in themselves. They are not true Christians. Their hearts are not changed. They have not seen their guilt and danger, and the true excellency of Christ. They are not really attached to the gospel; and when they are tried, and persecution comes, they fall—as the rootless grain withers before the scorching rays of the noon-day sun. ¶ *Anon.* Quickly, or readily. They do not look at it coolly, and as matter of principle. ¶ *Is offended.* That is, stumbles and falls. Persecution and trial are placed in his path, and he falls as he would over a stumbling block. He has not strength of principle enough—not confidence in God to carry him through

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.<sup>1</sup>

22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care<sup>2</sup> of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches,<sup>3</sup> choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxiv. 10; xxvi. 31. <sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 16.  
<sup>3</sup> Luke xiv. 16—24. <sup>4</sup> Mark x. 23. <sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 9.  
<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 10.

them. ¶ *The thorns.* These represent cares, anxieties, and the deceitful lure of riches, or the way in which a desire to be rich deceives us. They take the time and attention. They do not leave opportunity to think and examine the state of the soul. Besides, riches allure and promise what they do not yield. They promise to make us happy; but, when gained, they do not do it. The soul is not satisfied. There is the same desire to possess more wealth. And to this there is no end, but death. In doing it, there is every temptation to be dishonest, to cheat, to take advantage of others, to oppress others, and to wring their hard earnings from the poor. Every evil passion is therefore cherished by the love of gain; and it is no wonder that the word is choked, and every good feeling destroyed, by this execrable love of gold. See 1 Tim. vi. 7—10. How many, O how many, thus foolishly drown themselves in destruction and perdition! How many more might reach heaven, if it were not for this deep-seated love of that which fills with care, deceives the soul, and finally leaves it naked, and guilty, and lost!

23. *Into good ground.* Those whose hearts are prepared by grace to receive it honestly, and to give it full opportunity to grow. In a rich and mellow soil, in a heart that submits itself to the full influence of truth, unchecked by cares and anxieties, under the showers and summer suns of divine grace, with the heart spread open, like a broad luxuriant field, to the rays of the morning and to evening dews—the gospel takes deep root, and

into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 ¶ Another<sup>5</sup> parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed<sup>6</sup> in his field:

25 But while men slept his

<sup>4</sup> John xv. 5. <sup>5</sup> Isa. xxviii. 10, 13. <sup>6</sup> 1 Pet. i. 23.

grows; it has full room, and then and there only shows what it is.

24—30. *The kingdom of heaven is likened, &c.* That is, the gospel resembles. The kingdom of heaven, see Note, Matt. iii. 2, means here the effect of the gospel by its being preached. The meaning of this parable is plain. The field represents the world in which the gospel is preached. The good seed, the truths preached by Christ and his apostles.

25. *While men slept, his enemy came, &c.* That is, in the night, when it could be done without being seen, an enemy came and scattered bad seed on the new ploughed field, perhaps before the good seed had been harrowed in. Satan thus sows false doctrine in darkness. In the very place where the truth is preached, and while the hearts of people are open to receive it, by false but plausible teachers, he takes care to inculcate false sentiments. Often it is one of his arts, in a revival of religion, to spread secretly dangerous notions of piety. Multitudes are persuaded that they are Christians, who are deceived. They are awakened, convicted, and alarmed. They take this for conversion. Or they find their burden gone; they fancy that they hear a voice; or a text of scripture is brought to them, saying that their sins are forgiven; or they see Christ hanging on the cross in a vision; or they dream that their sins are pardoned, and they suppose they are Christians. But they are deceived. None of these things are any conclusive evidence of piety. All these may exist, and still there be no true love of God or Christ, and no real hatred of

enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants<sup>1</sup> of the householder came and said unto him, Sir didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. III. 5—9.

sin, and change of heart. An enemy may do it to deceive them, and to bring dishonour on religion. ¶ *Sowed tares.* By *tares* is probably meant a degenerate kind of wheat, or the darnel grass growing in Palestine. In its growth and form it has a strong resemblance to genuine wheat. But it either produces no grain, or that of a very inferior and hurtful kind. Probably it comes near to what we mean by chess. It was extremely difficult to separate it from the genuine wheat, on account of its similarity while growing. Thus it aptly represented hypocrites in the church. Strongly resembling Christians in their experience, and, in some respects, their lives, it is impossible to distinguish them from genuine Christians, nor can they be separated until it is done by the great Searcher of hearts at the day of judgment. *An enemy*—the devil—hath done it. And no where has he shown profounder cunning, or done more to adulterate the purity of the gospel. ¶ *And went his way.* There is something very expressive in this. He knew the soil; he knew how the seed would take root, and grow. He had only to sow the seed, and let alone. So Satan knows the soil in which he sows his doctrine. He knows that in the human heart it will take deep and rapid root. It needs but little culture. Grace needs constant attendance and care. Error, and sin, and hypocrisy, are the native products of the human heart; and, when left alone, start up with deadly luxuriance.

26. *Then appeared the tares also.* That is, then was first discovered the tares. They had grown with the wheat, but so much like it as not to be noticed, till the wheat began to ripen. So, true

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together<sup>2</sup> until the harvest: and in the time of

<sup>2</sup> Ch. III. 12; xxi. 10—14. Mal. III. 18. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

piety and false hopes are not known by professions, by blades, and leaves, and flowers, but by the fruit.

29. *Ye root up also the wheat.* They so much resembled the true wheat, that even then it would be difficult to separate them. By gathering them, they would tread down the wheat, loosen and disturb the earth, and greatly injure the crop. In the harvest it could be done without injury.

30. *Let both grow together.* They would not spoil the true wheat; and in time of harvest it would be easy to separate them. Our Saviour teaches us here: 1. That hypocrites and deceived persons must be expected in the church. 2. That this is the work of the enemy of man. They are not the work of Christianity, any more than traitors are of patriotism, or counterfeiters are of the proper effect of legislating about money. They belong to the world; and hypocrisy is only one form of sin. The Christian religion never made a hypocrite; nor is there a hypocrite on the face of the earth whose principles and practice it does not condemn. 3. That all hope of removing them entirely would be vain. 4. That an attempt to remove them altogether would injure real Christianity, by causing excitements, discord, and hard feelings even among Christians. 5. That he will himself separate them at the proper time. There is no doubt that it is the duty of the church to attempt to keep itself pure, and to cut off gross and manifest offenders. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. He refers to those who may be suspected of hypocrisy, but against whom it cannot be proved; to those who so successfully imitate Christians as to make it difficult or impossible for man to distinguish them.

harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to <sup>1</sup> burn them : but gather the wheat <sup>2</sup> into my barn.

31 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a <sup>3</sup> grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field :

32 Which indeed is the <sup>4</sup> least of all seeds : but when it is grown, it

<sup>1</sup> Mat. iv. 1. <sup>2</sup> Luke iii. 17. <sup>3</sup> Mark iv. 30. <sup>4</sup> Psa. lxxiii. 16. Ezek. xlvii. 1—5.

31, 32. See also Mark iv. 30—32. *The kingdom of heaven.* See Note, Matt. ii. 2. It means here either piety in a renewed heart, or the church. In either case the commencement is small. In the heart, it is at first feeble, easily injured, and much exposed. In the church, there were few at first, ignorant, unknown, and unhonoured ; yet soon it was to spread through the world. ¶ *Grain of mustard seed.* The plant here described was very different from that which is known among us. It was several years before it bore fruit, and became properly a tree. Mustard, with us, is an annual plant : it is always small, and is properly an herb. The Hebrew writers speak of the mustard tree as one on which they could climb, as on a fig-tree. Its size was much owing to the climate. All plants of that nature grow much larger in a warm climate, like that of Palestine, than in colder regions. The seeds of this tree were remarkably small ; so that they, with the great size of the plant, were an apt illustration of the progress of the church, and of the nature of faith. Matt. xvii. 20.

Young converts often suppose they have much religion. It is not so. They are, indeed, in a new world. Their hearts glow with new affections. They have an elevation, an ecstasy of emotion, which they may not have afterwards, like a blind man suddenly restored to sight. The sensation is new, and peculiarly vivid. Yet little is seen distinctly. Their impressions are indeed more vivid and cheering, than those of him who has long seen, and to whom objects are familiar. In a little time, too, the young convert

is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, <sup>5</sup> so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 ¶ Another parable spake he unto them ; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures <sup>6</sup> of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these things spake Jesus

<sup>5</sup> Ezek. xvii. 23. <sup>6</sup> The Greek word signifies a measure of about a peck and a half wanting a little more than a pint.

will see more distinctly, will judge more intelligently, will love more strongly, though not with so much new emotion, and will be prepared to make more sacrifices for the cause of Christ.

33. *The kingdom of heaven.* This phrase means the same here as in the last parable ; perhaps, however, denoting more properly the secret and hidden nature of piety in the soul. The other parable declared the fact that the gospel would greatly spread, and that piety in the heart would greatly increase. This declares the way or mode in which it would be done. It is secret, silent, steady ; pervading all the faculties of the soul, and all the kingdoms of the world, as leaven, or yeast, though hidden in the flour, and though deposited only in one place, works silently till all the mass is brought under its influence. ¶ *Three measures.* These were small measures ; see the margin ; but the particular amount is of no consequence to the story. Nor is any thing to be drawn from the fact that three are mentioned. It is mentioned as a circumstance giving interest to the parable, but designed to convey no spiritual instruction. The measure mentioned here probably contained about a peck and a half.

34, 35. *That it might be fulfilled.* This is taken from Psalm lxxviii. 2, 3. The sense, and not the very words of the Psalm are given. Christ taught as did that prophet, Asaph, in parabics. The words of Asaph described the manner in which Christ taught, and in this sense it could be said that they were fulfilled. See Notes on Matt. i. 22, 23.

unto the multitude in parables ;  
 1 and without a parable spake he  
 not unto them :

35 That it might be fulfilled  
 which was spoken by the prophet,  
 saying, 2 I will open my mouth in  
 parables ; I will utter things which  
 have been kept 3 secret from the  
 foundation of the world.

36 ¶ Then Jesus sent the mul-  
 titude away, and went into the  
 house : and his disciples came unto  
 him, saying, Declare unto us the  
 parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto  
 them, He that soweth the good  
 seed is the Son of man ;

38 The field is the world ; 4 the  
 good seed are the children of the  
 kingdom ; 5 but the tares are the  
 children of the wicked 6 one ;

1 Mark iv. 33. 2 Psal. lxxviii. 2. 3 Luke x.  
 24. Rom. xvi. 25, 26. Col. i. 26. 4 Rom. x. 18.  
 Col. i. 6. 5 1 Pet. i. 23. 6 John viii. 44. Acts  
 xiii. 10. 1 John iii. 8.

36—43. *Declare unto us.* That is,  
 explain the meaning of the parable. This  
 was done in so plain a manner as to render  
 comment unnecessary. The Son of man,  
 the Lord Jesus, sows the good seed ; that  
 is, preaches the gospel. This he did per-  
 sonally, and does now by his ministers,  
 his providence, and his Spirit, by all the  
 means of conveying truth to the mind.  
 This seed was by various means, to be  
 carried over all the world. It was to be  
 confined to no particular nation or people.  
 The good seed was the children of the  
 kingdom ; that is, of the kingdom of God,  
 or Christians. For these the Saviour  
 toiled and died. They are the fruit of  
 his labours. Yet amidst them were wicked  
 men. All hypocrites and unbelievers in  
 the church are the work of Satan. They  
 must, however, remain together till the  
 end ; when they shall be separated, and the  
 righteous saved, and the wicked lost. The  
 one shall shine clear as the sun ; the other  
 be cast into a furnace of fire, a most  
 expressive image of suffering. We have  
*no idea of more acute suffering*, than to  
 be thrown into the fire, and to have our

39 The enemy that sowed them  
 is the devil ; the harvest is the end  
 of the world ; 7 and the reapers are  
 the angels. 8

40 As therefore the tares are  
 gathered and burned in the fire ; 9  
 so shall it be in the end of this  
 world.

41 The Son of man shall send  
 forth his angels, and they shall  
 gather out of his kingdom all  
 10 things that offend, and 11 them  
 which do iniquity ;

42 And 12 shall cast them into a  
 furnace of fire : there 13 shall be  
 wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous  
 shine 14 forth as the sun in the  
 kingdom of their Father. Who  
 hath ears to hear, let him hear.

7 Joel iii. 13. 8 Rev. xiv. 15—19.  
 9 Ver. 30. 10 Or, scandals. 11 Luke  
 xiii. 27. 12 Ch. iii. 12. Rev. xix. 20 ; xx. 10.  
 13 Ver. 50 ; ch. viii. 12. 14 Dan. xii. 3. 1 Cor.  
 xv. 42.

bodies made capable of bearing the burn-  
 ing heat, and living on in this burning  
 heat for ever and for ever. It is not  
 certain that our Saviour meant to teach here  
 that hell is made up of material fire ; but  
 it is certain that he meant to teach that this  
 would be a proper representation of those  
 sufferings. We may be further assured that  
 the Redeemer would not deceive, or use  
 words to torment and tantalize us. He  
 would not talk of hell-fire which had no  
 existence ; nor would the God of truth  
 hold out frightful images merely to terrify  
 mankind. If he has spoken of hell, then  
 there is a hell. If he meant to say that  
 the wicked shall suffer, then they will  
 suffer. If he did not mean to deceive  
 mankind, then there is a hell ; and then  
 the wicked will suffer. The impenitent,  
 therefore, should be alarmed. And the  
 righteous, however much wickedness they  
 may see, and however many hypocrites  
 there may be in the church, should be  
 cheered with the prospect that soon the  
 just shall be separated from the unjust,  
 and that they shall shine as the sun in the  
 kingdom of their Father.

44 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid <sup>1</sup> in field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth <sup>2</sup> all that he hath, and buyeth <sup>3</sup> that field.

45 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who, when he had found one

\* pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered <sup>5</sup> of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of

Prov. II. 4, 5. \* Phil. III. 7, 8. \* Isa. lv. 1. v. III. 18.

\* Prov. III. 14, 15; viii. 11. \* Ch. xxii. 10.

44. *The kingdom of heaven.* The spel. The new dispensation. The <sup>1</sup> of eternal life. See Matt. iii. 2. He compares it to a treasure hid in a field. <sup>2</sup> is, to money concealed; or more truly, to a mine of silver or gold, that is undiscovered by others, and unknown to the owner of the field. ¶ *He hideth.* <sup>3</sup> is, he conceals the fact that he has found it; he does not tell of it. With a view of obtaining this treasure, a man would go and sell his property, and buy the field. The conduct of the man would be dishonest. It would be his duty to inform the owner of the field of the discovery. He would be really endeavouring to gain property belonging to another far less than its real value; and the principle of real integrity would require him to inform him of the discovery. But Christ does not intend to vindicate his conduct. He merely states the way in which men do actually manage to obtain wealth. He states a case, where a man would actually sacrifice his property, and exercise diligence and watchfulness, to obtain it. The point of the parable lies in the earnestness, the anxiety, the care, to obtain the treasure. The gospel is valuable as such a treasure. Psa. xix. 10. Prov. iii. 13—15. From most men it is desired. When a man sees it, and hears it, it is his duty to sacrifice all in the way of his obtaining it; and to seek it with the earnestness with which other men seek for gold. The truth often lies buried; is like rich veins of ore in the sacred scriptures; it must be searched out with diligence; and it will repay him for all his sacrifices. Luke xiv. 33. Phil. i. 8.

45, 46. *The kingdom of heaven is like*

*unto a merchant man.* The meaning is, that the proper seeking for salvation, or the proper conduct in reference to religion, is like the conduct of a merchant-man. In his searches he found one pearl of great value, and sold all his possessions to obtain it. So, says he, men seeking for happiness and finding the gospel, the pearl of great price, should be willing to lose all other things for this. Pearls are precious stones, found in the shells of oysters, chiefly in the East Indies. Matt. vii. 6. They are valuable on account of their beauty, and because they are rare. The value of them is greatly increased by their size. The meaning of this parable is nearly the same as the other. It is designed to represent the gospel as of more value than all other things, and to impress on us the duty of sacrificing all that we possess in order to obtain it.

47—50. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net,* &c. This parable does not differ in meaning from that of the tares. The gospel is compared to a net, dragging along on the bottom of the lake, and collecting all, good and bad. The gospel may be expected to do the same. But in the end of the world, when the net is drawn in, the bad will be separated from the good: the one will be lost, and the other saved. Our Saviour never fails to keep before our minds the great truth that there is to be a day of judgment, and that there will be a separation of good and evil. He came to preach salvation; and it is a remarkable fact, also, that all the most striking accounts of hell, and of the sufferings of the damned, are from his lips. How does this agree with the representation of those who say that all will be saved?

the world: the angels shall come forth, and <sup>1</sup> sever the wicked from among the just,

50 And <sup>2</sup> shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is an*

householder, which bringeth forth out <sup>3</sup> of his treasure *things new and old.*<sup>4</sup>

53 ¶ And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

54 And <sup>5</sup> when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and these mighty works?

55 Is not this the carpenter's

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxv. 32. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Prov. x. 21; xv. 7; xviii. 4. <sup>4</sup> Cant. vii. 12. <sup>5</sup> Mark vi. 2—6.

51—53. Jesus kindly asked them whether they had understood these things. If not, he was still willing to teach them. He enjoined on them their duty to make a proper use of this knowledge, by speaking another parable. ¶ *Every scribe—instructed unto the kingdom of heaven.* That is, every man that is acquainted with the gospel, or with the truth. A scribe was a learned man. As the disciples had said that they had understood the truth, he says that it should not be unemployed. They should bring it forth in due time, like a householder bringing out of his treasury, or place of deposit, what had been laid up there at any time, as it was needed. ¶ *Bringeth forth.* As occasion demands; as sickness, or calamity, or the wants of his family, or the poor require. ¶ *Treasure.* The word *treasure* here means a place of deposit, not for money merely, but for any thing necessary for the comfort of a family. It is the same as treasury or a place of deposit. ¶ *New and old.* Things lately acquired, or things that had been laid up for a long time. So, said Christ, be you. This truth, new or old, which you have gained, keep it not laid up and hid, but bring it forth, in due season, and on proper occasions, to benefit others. Every preacher should be properly instructed. Christ for three years gave instructions to the apostles; and they who preach should be able to understand the gospel, to defend it, and to communicate its truth to others. Human learning *alone* is indeed of no value to a minister; but *all learning* that will enable him better

to understand the Bible, and to communicate its truths, is valuable, and should, if possible, be gained. A minister should be like the father of a family: distributing to the church as it needs; and out of his treasures bringing forth truth to confirm the feeble, enlighten the ignorant, and guide those in danger of straying away.

54. *Into his own country.* That is, into Nazareth. Mark, who has also recorded this, ch. vi. 1—6, says that it took place on the sabbath. It was common for our Saviour to speak in the synagogues. Any Jew had a right to address the people, if called on by the minister; and our Saviour often availed himself of the right to instruct the people, and declare his doctrines. See Matt. iv. 23.

55, 56. *Is not this the carpenter's son?* Mark says, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" Both these expressions would probably be used in the course of the conversation; and Matthew has recorded one, and Mark the other. The expression recorded by Mark is a strong, perhaps decisive, proof that he had worked at the business till he was thirty years of age. The people in the neighbourhood would understand well the nature of his early employments. It is, therefore, almost certain that this had been his manner of life. A useful employment is always honourable. Idleness is the parent of mischief. Our Saviour, therefore, spent the greatest part of his life in honest, useful industry. Till the age of thirty he did not choose to enter on his great work; and it was proper before that time, that

not his mother called  
and his brethren, James,  
and Simon, and Judas ?  
and his sisters, are they not  
us ? Whence then hath  
all these things ?  
and they were offended <sup>1</sup> in

xliv. 7; lili. 3. John vi. 42.

set an example to the world  
able, though humble industry.  
wasted in such employments.  
appointed as the lot of man.  
delity, in the relations of life  
secure; in honest industry, how-  
ble; in patient labour, if con-  
h a life of religion; we may be  
God will approve our conduct.  
reover, the custom of the Jews  
l their children, even those of  
d learning, to some trade, or  
ccupation. Thus Paul was a  
r. Compare Acts xviii. 3.  
s an example of great conde-  
nd humility. It staggers the  
ny that the Son of God should  
an occupation so obscure and  
e infidel sneers at the idea that  
ade the worlds should live thir-  
humble life, as a poor and un-  
chanic. Yet the same infidel  
r praise Peter the Great of  
ause he laid aside his imperial  
d entered the British service as  
enter, that he might learn the  
building. Was the purpose  
f more importance than that of  
God? If Peter, the heir to the  
he Czars, might leave his ele-  
; and descend to an humble  
it, and secure by it the ap-  
he world, why not the King of  
an infinitely higher object?  
*hren, James, &c.* The fair in-  
a of this passage is, that these  
ons and daughters of Joseph  
. The people in the neigh-  
bought so, and spoke of them

y were offended in him. That  
k offence at his humble birth;  
indigent circumstances of his  
They were too proud to be-  
me whom they took to be their  
*inferior in family connexions.*

him. But Jesus said unto them,  
A prophet is not without honour,  
save in his own country, and in his  
own house.

58 And <sup>2</sup> he did not many mighty  
works there because of their un-  
belief.

<sup>2</sup> Mark vi. 5, 6. Luke iv. 25—29. Heb. iii.  
12—19.

Men always look with envy on those of  
their own rank who advance pretensions  
to uncommon wisdom or superior power.  
¶ *A prophet is not without honour, &c.*  
This seems to be a proverbial expression.  
Jesus advances it as a general truth. There  
might be some exceptions to it, but he was  
not an exception. Every where else he  
had been more honoured than at home.  
There they knew his family. They had  
seen his humble life. They had been his  
companions. They were envious of his  
wisdom, and too proud to be taught by  
him. A case remarkably similar to this  
occurs in the history of the discovery of  
America. Columbus, a native of Genoa,  
had, by patient study, conceived the idea  
that there was a vast continent which  
might be reached by sailing to the west.  
Of this his countrymen had no belief.  
Learned men had long studied the science  
of geography, and they had never imagined  
that such a continent could exist; and  
they were indignant that he, an obscure  
man, should suppose that he possessed  
wisdom superior to all the rest of mankind  
united. It was accordingly a fact, that out  
of his own country he was obliged to seek  
for patrons of his undertaking; that there  
he received his first honours; and that to  
other kingdoms the discoveries of the ob-  
scure Genoese gave their chief wealth and  
highest splendour.

58. *Did not many mighty works.* Mir-  
acles. This implies that he performed  
some miracles. Mark tells us what they  
were. He laid his hands on a few sick  
folk, and healed them. ¶ *Because of  
their unbelief.* That is, it would have  
been useless to the great purposes of  
his mission to work miracles there. We  
are not to suppose that his power was  
limited by the belief, or unbelief, of men.  
But they were so prejudiced, so set against  
him, that they were not in a condition to  
judge of evidence, and to be convinced.



## CHAPTER XIV.

*Herod's opinion of Jesus, 1, 2. John Baptist's imprisonment and death, 3—12. Jesus goes to a desert, 13, 14. Feeding of five thousand by miracle, 15—21. Christ's prayer alone, 22, 23. Jesus walks on the sea, 24—33. Miracles in Gennesaret, 34—36.*

**A**T that time<sup>1</sup> Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore

<sup>1</sup> Mark vi. 14. Luke ix. 7—9.

They would have charged it to derangement, or sorcery, or the agency of the devil. Compare John x. 20. It would have been of no use, therefore, in proving to them that he was from God, to have worked miracles. He did, therefore, only those things which were the proper work of benevolence, and which could not easily be charged on the devil. He gave sufficient proof of his mission, and left them, in their chosen unbelief, without excuse. It is also true, in spiritual things, that the unbelief of a people prevents the influences of the Holy Spirit from being sent down to bless them. God requires faith. He hears only the prayers of faith. And when there is little true belief, and prayer is cold and formal, there the people sleep in spiritual death, and are unblessed.

## CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Herod the tetrarch.* See also Mark vi. 14—16. Luke ix. 7—9. This was a son of Herod the Great. Herod the Great died probably in the first year after the birth of Christ, and left his kingdom to his three sons, of whom this Herod Antipas was one. He ruled over Galilee and Perea. See Note, Matt. ii. 15. The title *tetrarch* literally denotes one who rules over a fourth part of any country. In a remote signification, it means one who rules over a third, or even a half of a nation. ¶ *Heard of the fame of Jesus.* Jesus had then been a considerable time engaged in the work of the ministry, and it may seem remarkable that Herod had not before heard of him. He might have, however, been absent on some ex-

mighty<sup>2</sup> works do shew forth themselves in him.

3 ¶ For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4 For John said unto him, It<sup>3</sup> is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a<sup>4</sup> prophet.

<sup>2</sup> Or, are wrought by him. <sup>3</sup> Lev. xviii. 16; xx. 21. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xxi. 26. Luke xx. 6.

pedition to a remote part of the country. It is to be remembered, also, that he was a man of much dissoluteness of morals; and that he paid little attention to the affairs of the people. He might have heard of Jesus before, but the report had not arrested his attention. He did not think it a matter worthy of much regard.

2. *This is John the Baptist.* Herod feared John. His conscience smote him for his crimes. He remembered that he had wickedly put John to death. He knew him to be a distinguished prophet; and he concluded that no other one was capable of working such miracles but he who had been distinguished in his life, and who had again risen from the dead, and entered the dominions of his murderer. The alarm in his court it seems was general. Herod's conscience told him that this was John. Others thought that it might be the expected Elijah, or one of the old prophets. Mark vi. 15.

3—5. *For Herod had laid hold on John, &c.* See Mark vi. 17—20. Luke iii. 19, 20. This Herodias was a granddaughter of Herod the Great. She was first married to Herod Philip, by whom she had a daughter, Salome, probably the one that danced and pleased Herod. Josephus says that this marriage of Herod Antipas with Herodias took place while he was on a journey to Rome. He stopped at his brother's; fell in love with his brother's wife; agreed to put away his own wife, the daughter of Aretas, king of Petrea; and Herodias agreed to leave her own husband, and live with him. They were living, therefore, in

6 But when Herod's birthday as kept,<sup>1</sup> the daughter of Herodias danced<sup>2</sup> before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath<sup>3</sup> to give her whatsoever she could ask.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xl. 20. <sup>2</sup> In the midst. <sup>3</sup> Est. v. 3, 6; 1. 2.

lultery; and John in faithfulness, enough at the risk of his life, had reformed them for their crimes. Herod as guilty of two crimes in this act: 1. Of adultery, as she was the wife of another man. 2. Of incest, as she was a near relation, and such marriages were expressly forbidden. Lev. xviii. 16.

6—13. See also Mark vi. 21—29. *But when Herod's birthday was come.* Kings were accustomed to observe the day of their birth with much pomp, and commonly also by giving a feast to their principal nobility. See Gen. xl. 20. Mark adds, that this birthday was kept by taking a supper to his "lords, high captains, and chief estates in Galilee." That is, to the chief men in office. High captains means, in the original, commanders of thousands, or a division of a thousand men. ¶ *The daughter of Herodias.* That is Salome, her daughter by her former husband. This was a violation of all the rules of modesty and propriety. One great principle of all eastern nations is to keep their females from public view. For this purpose they were confined in a particular part of the house, called the harem. If they appeared in public, it is always with a veil, so closely drawn that their faces cannot be seen. No modest woman would have appeared in this manner before the court; and it is probable, therefore, that she took of the dissolute principles of her mother. It is also probable that the dance as one well known in Greece, the lascivious and wanton dance of the Ionics.

7. *He promised with an oath.* This was a foolish and wicked oath. To please a wanton girl, the monarch called the eternal God to witness his willingness to give her half his kingdom. It seems also that he was willing to shed the holiest blood it contained. *An oath like this it*

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's<sup>4</sup> head in a charger

9 And the king was sorry: <sup>5</sup> nevertheless for the oath's<sup>6</sup> sake, and them which sat with him at

<sup>4</sup> Prov. xxix. 10. <sup>5</sup> Judg. xi. 31, 35. Dan. vi. 14—16. <sup>6</sup> Judg. xxi. 1. 1 Sam. xiv. 28; xxv. 22. Ecc. v. 2.

was not lawful to make, and it should have been broken. See ver. 9.

8. *Being before instructed of her mother.* Not before she danced, but afterwards; and before she made the request of Herod. See Mark vi. 24. The only appearance of what was right in the whole transaction was her honouring her mother, by consulting her; and in this she only intended to accomplish the purposes of wickedness more effectually. ¶ *In a charger.* The original word means a large platter, on which food is placed. We should have supposed that she would have been struck with abhorrence at such a direction. But she seems to have been gratified. John, by his faithfulness, had offended the whole family; and here was ample opportunity for an adulterous mother and dissolute child to gratify their resentment. It was customary then for princes to require the heads of persons ordered for execution to be brought to them. For this there were two reasons: 1. To gratify their resentment—to feast their eyes on the proof that their enemy was dead; and, 2. To ascertain the fact that the sentence had been executed. There is a similar instance in Roman history of a woman requiring the head of an enemy to be brought to her. Agrippina, the mother of Nero, who was afterwards emperor, sent an officer to put to death Lollia Paulina, who had been her rival for the imperial dignity. When Lollia's head was brought to her, not knowing it at first, she examined it with her own hands, till she perceived some particular feature by which the lady was distinguished.\*

9. *And the king was sorry.* There might have been several reasons for this: 1. Herod had a high respect for John, and feared him. He knew that he

\* Lardner's Credibility, Part 1. book. 1. ch. 1.

meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.<sup>1</sup>

11 And his head was brought in

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 12; xxi. 35, 36. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.

was a holy man, and had "observed him," that is, regarded him with respect and veneration. He had done some things in obedience to John's precepts, Mark vi. 20. 2. John was in high repute among the people, and Herod might have been afraid that his murder might excite commotion. 3. Herod, though a wicked man, does not appear to have been insensible to some of the common principles of human nature. Here was a great and most manifest crime proposed; no less than the murder of an acknowledged prophet of the Lord. It was deliberate. It was to gratify the malice of a wicked woman. It was the price of a few moments' entertainment. His conscience, though in feeble and dying accents, checked him. He would have preferred a request not so manifestly wicked, and that would not have involved him in so much difficulty. ¶ *For the oath's sake.* Herod felt that he was bound by this oath. But he was not. The oath should not have been taken. But, being taken, he could not be bound by it. No oath could justify a man in committing murder. The true principle is, that Herod was bound by a prior obligation, by the law of God, not to commit murder; and no act of his, be it an oath or any thing else, could free him from the obligation. ¶ *And them which sat with him at meat.* This was the strongest reason why Herod murdered John. He had not firmness enough to obey the law of God, and to follow the dictates of conscience, against the opinions of wicked men. He was afraid of the charge of cowardice, and want of spirit, afraid of ridicule and the contempt of the wicked. This is the principle of the laws of honour. This is the foundation of duelling. It is not so much for his own sake that one man murders another in a duel, for the offence is often a mere trifle. It is a word or look that never would injure him. It is *because the men of honour, as they call themselves, his companions, would consi-*

der him a coward, and laugh at him. Those companions may be unprincipled contemners of the laws of God and man. And yet the duellist, against his own conscience, against the laws of God, against the good opinion of the virtuous part of the world, and against the laws of his country, seeks, by deadly aim, to murder another, merely to gratify his dissolute companions. And this is the law of honour! This is the secret of duelling! This is the source of that remorse that settles in awful blackness, and that thunders damnation around the duellist in his dying hours! It should be added, this is the source of all youthful guilt. We are led along by others. We have not firmness enough to follow the teachings of a father and of the law of God. Young men are afraid of being called mean and cowardly by the wicked; and they often sink low in vice, never to rise again. ¶ *At meat.* That is, at supper. The word *meat*, at the time the Bible was translated, meant provisions of all kinds. It is now restricted to flesh, and does not convey a full idea of the original.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried<sup>2</sup> it, and went and told Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxviii. 4; xxxix. 10. Ezek. xix. 2, 1  
<sup>3</sup> Acts viii. 2.

10. *And he sent and beheaded him.* For the sake of these wicked men, the bloody offering, the head of the slaughtered prophet, was brought and given as the reward to the daughter and mother. What an offering to a woman! Josephus says of her that "she was a woman full of ambition and envy, having a mighty influence on Herod, and able to persuade him to things he was not at all inclined to." This is one of the many proofs that we have that the evangelists drew characters according to truth.

12. *And his disciples, &c.* The head was with Herodias. The body, with pious care, they buried. ¶ *And went and told Jesus.* This was done, probably for the following reasons: 1. It was an important event, and one particularly connected with the work of Jesus. John was the forerunner, and it was important that he should be made acquainted with his

13 ¶ When Jesus heard of it, he<sup>1</sup> departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

14 And Jesus went forth, and<sup>2</sup> saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion to-

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 23; xii. 15. Mark vi. 32. Luke ix. 10-17. John vi. 1, 2. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xv. 32.

death. 2. It is not unreasonable to suppose that in their affliction they came to him for consolation; nor is it improper in our affliction to follow their example, and go and tell Jesus. 3. Their master had been slain by a cruel king; Jesus was engaged in the same cause, and they probably supposed that he was in danger. They, therefore, came to warn him of it, and he brought a place of safety. Ver. 13.

13-21. A full narrative of the feeding the five thousand is given in each of the other evangelists; in Mark vi. 32-44; in Luke ix. 10-17; in John vi. 1-14.

13. And when Jesus heard of it he departed. He went to a place of safety. He never threw himself unnecessarily into danger. It was proper that he should secure his life, till the time should come when it would be proper for him to die. ¶ By a ship into a desert place. That is, he crossed the sea of Galilee. He went to the country east of the sea, into a place little inhabited. Luke says, ch. ix. 10, he went to a place called Bethsaida. See Note, Matt. xi. 21. A desert place means a place little cultivated, where there were few or no inhabitants. On the east of the sea of Galilee there was a large tract of country of this description, rough, uncultivated, and chiefly used to pasture flocks.

14. Was moved with compassion. That is, pitied them. Mark, ch. vi. 34, says he was moved with compassion because they were as sheep having no shepherd. A shepherd is one who takes care of a flock. It was his duty to feed it, to defend it from wolves and other wild beasts; to take care of the young and feeble; to lead it by green pastures and still waters. Isa. xlii. In eastern countries this was a principal employment of the inhabitants. When Christ says the people were as sheep without a shepherd, he means

ward<sup>2</sup> them, and he healed their sick.

15 ¶ And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, 'This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals

16 But Jesus said unto them,

<sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 36. Mark vi. 34. John xi. 33-35. Heb. iv. 15.

that they had no teachers and guides who cared for them, and took pains to instruct them. The Scribes and Pharisees were haughty and proud, and cared little for the common people; and when they did attempt to teach them, they led them astray. They therefore came in great multitudes to Him who preached the gospel to the poor, Matt. xi. 5, and was thus the good Shepherd. John x. 14.

15. The time is now past. That is, the day is passing away; it is near night; and it is proper to make some provision for the temporal wants of so many. Perhaps it may mean, it was past the usual time for refreshment.

16. Jesus said, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. John adds, that previous to this, Jesus had addressed Philip, and asked, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? This he said to prove him;" that is, to try his faith; to test the confidence of Philip in himself. Philip, it seems, had not the kind of confidence which he ought to have had. He immediately began to think of their ability to purchase food for them. Two hundred pennyworth of bread, said he, would not be enough. In the original it is, two hundred denarii. These were Roman coins, amounting to about seven pence half-penny each. The whole two hundred, therefore, would have been equal to about six pounds five shillings. In the view of Philip, this was a great sum; a sum which twelve poor fishermen were by no means able to provide. It was this fact, and not any unwillingness to provide for them, which led the disciples to request that they should be sent into the villages around, in order to obtain food. Jesus knew how much they had, and he required of them, as he does of all, implicit faith, and told them to give them to eat. He

<sup>1</sup> They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. iv. 42—44. Heb. v. 2.

requires us to do what he commands; and we need not doubt that he will give us strength to accomplish it.

17. *We have here but five loaves, &c.* These loaves were in the possession of a lad, or young man, who was with them, and were made of barley. John vi. 9. It is possible that this lad was one in attendance on the apostles to carry their food; but it is most probable he was one who had provision to sell among the multitude. Barley was a cheap kind of food, scarcely one-third the value of wheat, and was much used by poor people. A considerable part of the food of the people in that region was probably fish, as they lived on the borders of a lake that abounded in fish.

19. *And he commanded the multitude to sit down.* In the original it is, to recline on the grass, or to lie as they did at their meals. The Jews never sat, as we do at meals, but reclined, or lay at length. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6. Mark and Luke add, that they reclined in companies by hundreds and by fifties. ¶ *And looking up to heaven, he blessed.* Luke adds, he blessed them; that is, the loaves. The expression *to bless*, means often to give thanks; sometimes to pray for a blessing; that is, to pray for the divine favour and friendship; to pray that what we do may meet God's approbation. Seeking a blessing on our food means, to pray that it may be made nourishing to our bodies; that we may have proper gratitude to God the giver, for providing for our wants; and that we may remember the Creator, while we partake of the bounties of his providence. Our Saviour always sought a blessing on his food. In this he was an example for us. What he did we should do. It is right thus to seek the blessing of God. He provides for us; he daily

and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: <sup>2</sup> and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xvi. 12—35. <sup>3</sup> 2 Kin. iv. 1—7.

opens his hand, and satisfieth our wants; and it is proper that we should render suitable acknowledgments for his goodness.

The custom among the Jews was universal. The form of prayer which they used in the time of Christ has been preserved by Jewish writers, the Talmudists. It is this: "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the King of the world, who hast produced this food and this drink, from the earth and the vine." ¶ *And brake.* The loaves of bread among the Jews were made thin and brittle, and were therefore broken and not cut.

20. *And they did all eat and were filled.* This was an undoubted miracle. The quantity must have been greatly increased, to have supplied so many. He that could increase that small quantity so much had the power of creation; and he that could do that could create the world out of nothing, and had no less than divine power. ¶ *Twelve baskets full.* The size of these baskets is unknown. They were probably such as travellers carried their provisions in. They were used commonly by the Jews in their journeys. In travelling among the Gentiles or Samaritans, a Jew could expect little hospitality. There were not, as now public houses for the entertainment of strangers. At great distances there were caravansaries, but they were intended chiefly for lodging places for the night, and not to provide food for travellers. Hence in journeying among strangers, or in deserts, they carried baskets of provisions; and this is the reason why they were furnished with them here. It is probable that each of the apostles had one, and they were all filled. John, ch. vi. 12, says that Jesus directed them to gather up these fragments, that nothing be lost: an example of economy. God creates all

21 And they that had eaten were out five thousand men, beside women and children.

22 ¶ And straightway Jesus restrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he <sup>1</sup> went up into

a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 8. Mark vi. 46. Luke vi. 12. Acts i. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Job ix. 8. Psa. xciii. 3, 4.

ed; it has, therefore, a kind of sacredness; it is all needed by some person or other, and none should be lost.

21. *Five thousand men, besides, &c.* Probably the number might have been as thousand. To feed so many was an act of great benevolence, and a stupendous miracle. The effect was such as might be expected. John says, ch. vi. 14, that they were convinced by it that he was that prophet that should come into the world; that is, the Messiah.

22, 23. *And straightway Jesus constrained, &c.* See Mark vi. 45, 56; John vi. 15—21. The word *straightway* means immediately; that is, as soon as the fragments were gathered up. To *restrain*, means to compel. It here means to command. There was no need of compulsion. They were at this time on the east side of Gennesareth. He directed them to get into a ship, and cross over to the other side; that is, to Capernaum. Mark adds, that he sent them to Bethsaida, ch. vi. 45. Bethsaida was situated at the place where the Jordan empties into the lake on the east side of the river. It is probable that he directed them to go in a ship or boat to Bethsaida, and remain there till he should dismiss the people, and that he would meet them here, and with them cross the lake. The effect of the miracle on the multitudes was so great, John vi. 15, that they believed him to be that prophet which should come into the world; that is, the Messiah, the king that they had expected, and they were about to take him by force and make him a king. To avoid this, Jesus got away from them as privately as possible. He went into a solitary mountain alone. In view of the temptation,

when human honours were offered to him, and almost forced upon him, he retired for private prayer; an example for all who are pressed with human honours and applause. Nothing is better to keep the mind humble and unambitious, than to seek some lonely place; to shut out the world, with all its honours; to realize that the great God, before whom all creatures and all honours sink to nothing, is round about us; and to ask him to keep us from pride and vain-glory.

24. *But the ship was now in the midst of the sea.* John says they had sailed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs. About seven and a half Jewish furlongs made a mile; so that the distance they had sailed was not more than about four miles. At no place was the sea of Tiberias more than ten miles in breadth, so that they were literally in the midst of the sea.

25. *And in the fourth watch of the night.* The Jews anciently divided the night into three divisions of four hours each. The first of these watches is mentioned in Lam. ii. 19; the middle watch in Judg. vii. 19; and the morning watch in Exod. xiv. 24. In the time of our Saviour they divided the night into four watches; the fourth having been introduced by the Romans. These watches consisted of three hours each. The first commenced at six, and continued till nine; the second from nine till twelve; the third from twelve to three; and the fourth from three to six. The first was called evening; the second midnight; the third cock-crowing; the fourth morning. Mark xiii. 35. It is probable that the term watch was given to each of these divisions, from the practice of placing sentinels around the camp in the time of war, or in cities

CHAPTER XV.

*Superstition rebuked, 1—9. What defiles a man, 10—20. The heathen woman and her daughter, 21—28. Christ and a multitude near the lake of Galilee, 29—31. Four thousand fed by miracle.*

blance to God, who continually does good.

X. A blessing should be sought in our enjoyments. Ver. 19. It is always right to imitate Christ. It is right to acknowledge our dependence on God, and in the midst of merries to pray that we may not forget the Giver.

XI. We see the duty of economy. The Saviour, who had power to create worlds by a word, yet commanded to take up the fragments, that nothing might be lost. John vi. 12. Nothing that God has created, and given to us, should be wasted.

XII. It is proper to make preparation for private prayer. Jesus sent the people away, that he might be alone. Ver. 22, 23. So Christians should take pains that they may have time and places for retirement. A grove, or a mountain, was the place where our Saviour sought to pray: and there too may we find and worship God.

XIII. In time of temptation, of prosperity, and honour, it is right to devote much time to secret prayer. Jesus, when the people were about to make him a king, retired to the mountain, and continued there till three o'clock in the morning. John vi. 15.

XIV. When Christ commands us to do a thing, we should do it. Ver. 22. Even if it should expose us to danger, it should be done.

XV. In times of danger and distress Jesus will see us, and will come to our relief. Ver. 25, 26. Even in the tempest that howls, or on the waves of affliction that beat around us, he will come, and we shall be safe.

XVI. We should never be afraid of him. We should always have good cheer when we see him. Ver. 27. When he says, "It is I," he also says, "Be not afraid." He can still the waves, and conduct us safely to the port which we seek.

XVII. Nothing is too difficult for us, when we act under the command of

THEN <sup>1</sup> came to Jesus Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

2 Why do thy disciples <sup>2</sup> transgress the tradition of the elders?

<sup>1</sup> Mark vii. 1—22. Luke v. 30. <sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 14

Christ. Peter at his command leaves the ship, and walks on the billows. Ver. 22.

XVIII. Christ sometimes leaves his people to see their weakness and their need of strength. Without his continual aid, they would sink. Peter had no strength of his own to walk on the deep; and Christ suffered him to see his dependence. Ver. 30.

XIX. The eye, in difficulty, should be fixed on Christ. As soon as Peter began to look at the waves and winds, rather than Christ, he began to sink. Ver. 30. True courage, in difficulties, consists not in confidence in ourselves, but in confidence in Jesus, the Almighty Saviour and Friend.

XX. Prayer may be instantly answered. When we are in immediate danger, and offer a prayer of faith, we may expect immediate aid. Ver. 31.

XXI. Pride comes before a fall. Peter was self-confident and proud, and he fell. His confidence and rashness were the very means of showing the weakness of his faith. Ver. 31.

XXII. It is proper to render homage to Jesus; and to worship him as the Son of God. Ver. 33.

XXIII. We should be desirous that all about us should partake of the benefits that Christ confers. When we know him, and have tested his goodness, we should take pains that all around us may also be brought to him, and be saved. Ver. 35.

XXIV. Jesus only can make us perfectly whole. No other being can save us. He that could heal the body can save the soul. A word can save us. With what earnestness ought we to plead with him that we may obtain his saving grace! Ver. 36.

CHAPTER XV.

1—9. See also Mark vii. 1—9. ¶ *Then came to Jesus, &c.* Mark says, that they saw the disciples of Jesus eating with hands unwashed.

2. Transgress the tradition of the

or they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? <sup>1</sup>

4 For God commanded, saying,

<sup>1</sup> Col. II. 8, 23. Tit. I. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Honour thy father and mother : and He <sup>3</sup> that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me ;

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xx. 12. Deut. v. 16. <sup>3</sup> Exod. xxi. 17. Lev. xx. 9.

*lers.* The word *elders* means literally old men. It here means the ancients, or our ancestors. *Tradition* means something handed down from one to another in memory : some precept or custom not commanded in the written law, but which they held themselves bound to observe. The Jews supposed that when Moses was at Mount Sinai, two sets of laws were delivered to him : one, they said, was recorded, and is that contained in the Old Testament ; the other was handed down from father to son, and kept uninterrupted to their day. They believed that Moses, before he died, delivered this law to Joshua, Joshua to the judges, and the judges to the prophets ; so that it was kept pure, till it was recorded in the *almuds*. In these books these pretended laws are now contained. They are exceedingly numerous, and very trifling. They are, however, regarded by the Jews as more important than either Moses or the prophets. One point in which the Pharisees differed from the Sadducees was, in holding to these traditions. It seems, however, that in the particular traditions here mentioned, all the Jews combined. "The Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not." Mark vii. 3. Mark has also added that this custom of washing extended not merely to their hands before eating, but in coming from the market ; and also to pots, and cups, and brazen vessels, and tables. Mark vii. 3, 4. They did this professedly for the sake of cleanliness. So far it was well. But they made it a matter of superstition. They regarded external purity as of much more importance than the purity of the heart. They had many foolish rules about it : as the quantity of water that was to be used ; the way in which it should be applied ; the number of times it should be changed ; the number of those that

might wash at a time, &c. These foolish rules our Saviour did not think it proper to regard ; and this was the reason why they found fault with him.

3. *But he answered, &c.* They accused him of violating their traditions, as though they were obligatory. In his answer he implied that they were not bound to obey these traditions. They were invented by men. He said also that these traditions could not be binding, as they violated the commandments of God. He proceeds to specify a case where their tradition made void one of the plain laws of God. And if that was their character, then they could not blame him for not regarding them.

4. *For God commanded, &c.* That is, in the fifth commandment, Exod. xx. 12 ; and in Exod. xxi. 17. To *honour*, is to obey, to reverence, to speak kindly to, to speak and think well of. To *curse*, is to disobey, to treat with irreverence, to swear at, to speak ill of, to think evil of in the heart, to meditate or do any evil to a parent. All this is included in the original word. ¶ *Let him die the death.* This is a Hebrew phrase, the same as saying, let him surely die. The Jewish law punishes this crime with death. This duty of honouring and obeying a parent, was what Christ said they had violated by their traditions. He proceeds to state the way in which it was done.

5. *It is a gift.* In Mark it is *Corban*. The word *corban* is a Hebrew word, denoting a gift. It here means a thing dedicated to the service of God, and, therefore, not to be appropriated to any other use. The Jews were in the habit of making such dedications. They devoted their property to him, for sacred uses, as they pleased. In doing this, they used the word *corban*, or some similar word ; saying, this thing is *corban*, i. e., it is a gift to God, or it is sacred to him.



6 And <sup>1</sup>honour not <sup>2</sup>his father or his mother, *he shall be free.*

<sup>3</sup>Thus have ye made the command-

<sup>1</sup> Tim. v. 3, 4, 8, 16. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xxvii. 16. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxix. 126. Jer. viii. 8. Mal. ii. 7-9.

The law required that when a dedication of this kind was made, it should be fulfilled. "Vow and pay unto the Lord your God." Psa. lxxvi. 11. See Deut. xxiii. 21. The law of God required that a son should honour his parent, i. e., among other things to provide for his wants when he was old and in distress. Yet the Jewish teachers said that it was more important for a man to dedicate his property to God, than to provide for the wants of his parent. If he had once devoted his property, once said it was corban, or a gift to God, it could not be appropriated even to the support of a parent. If a parent was needy and poor, and if he should apply to a son for assistance, and the son should reply, though in anger, it is devoted to God; this property which you need, and by which you might be profited by me, is corban, I give it to God; the Jews said the property could not be recalled, and the son was not under obligation to aid a parent with it. He had done a more important thing, in giving it to God. The son was free. They would not suffer him to do anything for his father after that. Thus he might in a moment free himself from the obligation to obey his father or mother. In a sense somewhat similar to this the chiefs and priests of the Sandwich islands had the power of devoting anything to the service of the gods, by saying that it was tabu, or tabued. That is, that it became consecrated to the service of religion; and no matter who had been the owner, it could then be appropriated to no other use. In this way they had complete power over all the possessions of the people, and could appropriate them to their own use under the pretence of devoting them to religion. They thus deprived the people of their property under the plea that it was consecrated to the gods; the Jewish son deprived his parents of a support under the plea that the property was devoted to the service of religion. The principle *was the same*; and both systems were *equally a violation of the rights of others.*

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ment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 *Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,*

Besides, the law said that a man that cursed his father; i. e., that refused to obey him, or to provide for him, or spoke in anger to him, should die. Yet the Jews said, that though in anger, and in real spite and hatred, a son said to his father, all that I have which could profit you, I have given to God, he should be free from blame. Thus the whole law was made void, or of no use, by what appeared to be an act of piety. No man according to their views, was bound to obey the fifth commandment, and to support an aged and needy parent, if either from superstition or spite he chose to give his property to God, that is, to some religious use.

Our Saviour did not mean to condemn the practice of giving to God, or to religious and charitable duties. This the law and the gospel equally required. He commended even a poor widow that gave all her living. Mark xii. 44. But he meant to condemn the practice of giving to God, where it interfered with our duty to parents and relations; where it was done to get rid of the duty of aiding them; and where it was done out of a malignant and rebellious spirit, with the semblance of piety, to get clear of doing to them what God required.

7. *Ye hypocrites!* See Note, Matt. vii. 5. Hypocrisy is the concealment of some base principle under the pretence of religion. Never was there a clearer instance of it than this, an attempt to get rid of the duty of providing for needy parents under an appearance of piety towards God. ¶ *Esaias.* That is, Isaiah. This prophecy is found in Isa. xxix. 13. ¶ *Prophecy of you.* That is, he spoke of the people of his day, of the Jews, as Jews, in terms that apply to the whole people. He properly characterized the nation in calling them hypocrites. The words are applicable to the nation at all times, and they apply, therefore, to you. He did not mean particularly to speak of the nation in the time of Christ; but he spoke of them as having a national character of hypocrisy. See also Isa. i. 4.

8 This <sup>1</sup> people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines <sup>2</sup> the commandments of men.

10 ¶ And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11 Not <sup>3</sup> that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but

<sup>1</sup> 1m. xxix. 13. <sup>2</sup> Col. ii. 22. <sup>3</sup> Acts x. 15. Rom. xiv. 14, 20. 1 Tim. iv. 4. Tit. i. 15.

8. *Draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, &c.* That is, they are regular in the forms of worship. They are strict in ceremonial observances, and keep the law outwardly; but God requires the heart, and that they have not rendered.

9. *In vain do they worship me.* That is, their attempts to worship are vain, or are not real worship, they are mere forms. *Teaching for doctrines, &c.* The word *doctrines*, here, means, the requirements of religion, things to be believed and practised in religion. God only has a right to declare what shall be done in his service; but they held their traditions to be superior to the written word of God, and taught them as doctrines binding the conscience.

10—14. See also Mark vii. 15—17. *And he called the multitude.* In opposition to the doctrines of the Pharisees, the Saviour took occasion to show them that the great source of pollution was the heart. They supposed that external things chiefly defiled a man. On this all their doctrines about purification were founded. This opinion of the Jews it was of great importance to correct. Jesus took occasion, therefore, to direct the people to the true source of defilement—their own hearts. He particularly directed them to it as of importance: *Hear and understand!*

11. *Not that which goeth into the mouth, &c.* The disciples were charged with being sinners for transgressing the tradition of the elders, in eating with unwashed hands. Christ replies that what they should eat could not render them sinners. The man, the moral agent, the

soul, could not be polluted by anything that was eaten. What proceeds from the man himself, from his heart, would defile him. ¶ *Defileth.* Pollutes, corrupts, renders sinful.

12. *The Pharisees were offended.* They were so zealous of their traditions that they could not endure that their absurdities should be exposed.

13. *Every plant, &c.* Religious doctrine is not unaptly compared to a plant. See 1 Cor. iii. 6—8. It is planted in the mind for the purpose of producing fruit in the life, or conduct. Jesus here says that all those doctrines, of which his Father was not the author, must be *rooted up*, or corrected. The false doctrines of the Pharisees, therefore, must be attacked; and it was no wonder if indignation were excited. It could not be helped. It was his duty to attack them. He was not surprised that they were enraged. But notwithstanding their opposition, their doctrines should be destroyed.

14. *Let them alone.* That is, do not be troubled at their rage. Be not anxious about it. The thing was to be expected. They were blind; they were in some respects sincere. They are greatly attached to their traditions, and you are not to wonder or interfere when they are indignant. They lead also the blind. They have a vast influence over the multitude, and it is to be expected that they will be enraged at any doctrines that go to lessen their authority or influence. By commanding them to *let them alone*, he does not mean to suffer them to remain in error, without any attempt to refute or correct them, for this he was

<sup>4</sup> John xv. 2, 6. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xxiii. 16—24. Isa. ix. 16; lvi. 10. Jer. xviii. 16—17. Luke vi. 39.

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the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

16 And Jesus said,<sup>1</sup> Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 10; Ch. xiii. 51. Mark viii. 17—21.

doing then; but he meant to charge his disciples not to mind them, or to regard their opposition. It was to be expected. ¶ *If the blind lead the blind, &c.* This was a plain proposition. A blind man, attempting to conduct blind men, would fall into any ditch that was in the way. So with religious teachers. If these Pharisees, themselves ignorant and blind, should be suffered to lead the ignorant multitude, both would be destroyed. This was another reason for confuting their errors, or for rooting up the plants which God had not planted. He wished, by doing it, to save the deluded multitude.

God often suffers one man to lead many to ruin. A rich and profligate man, an infidel, a man of learning, a politician, or a teacher, is allowed to sweep multitudes to ruin. This is not unjust, for those who are led are not compelled to follow such men. They are free in choosing such leaders, and they are answerable for being led to ruin.

15—20. See also Mark vii. 17—23. *Then answered Peter—Declare unto us this parable.* See Note, Matt. xiii. 3. The word *parable* sometimes means a dark or obscure saying. Psa. lxxviii. 2. Peter meant: explain to us more fully the obscure and somewhat novel doctrine. To us, now, it is plain: to the disciples, just coming out of Judaism, taught by the Jewish teachers, the doctrine of Jesus was obscure. Mark says that the disciples asked him. There is no contradiction. The question was put by Peter in the name of the disciples; or several of them put the question, though Matthew has mentioned only one. An omission is not a contradiction.

16. *Are ye also yet without understanding?* He appeals, in explaining *this*, to their common sense; and he won-

mouth<sup>2</sup> goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?<sup>3</sup>

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For<sup>4</sup> out of the heart pro-

<sup>2</sup> Luke vi. 45. Jas. iii. 6. <sup>3</sup> 2 Kin. x. 34. <sup>4</sup> Gen. vi. 5; viii. 21. Prov. vi. 14; xxiv. 9. Jer. xvii. 9. Rom. iii. 10—18. Gal. v. 19—21. Eph. ii. 3. Tit. iii. 3.

ceeders that they had not yet learned to judge the foolish traditions of the Jew by the decisions of common sense, and by his own instructions.

17. *Do ye not understand, &c.* The meaning of this may be thus expressed. The food which is eaten does not affect the mind, and therefore cannot pollute it. The doctrine of the Pharisees, that neglect of washing and of similar observances defiles a man, cannot be true. Those things pertain to the body as much as food does, and they cannot affect the soul. That must be purified by something else than external washing; and it is polluted by other things than a neglect of mere outward ceremonies. The seat of corruption is within. It is the heart itself, and if men would be made pure this must be cleansed. If that is corrupt the whole man is corrupt.

18—20. Christ proceeds to state what does defile the man, or render him a sinner: 1. *Evil thoughts.* These are the first things. These are the fountains of all others. Thought precedes action. Thought, or purpose, or motive, gives its character to conduct. All evil thoughts are here intended. Though we labour to suppress them, yet they defile us. They leave pollution behind them. 2. *Murders.* Taking the life of others with malice. The malice has its seat in the heart, and the murder therefore proceeds from the heart. 1 John iii. 15. 3. *Adulteries, fornications.* See Matt. v. 28. 4. *Thefts.* Theft is the taking and carrying away the goods of others without their knowledge or consent. It is produced by coveting the property of others. It proceeds, therefore, from the heart, and violates at the same time two commandments—the tenth in thought, and the eighth in act. 5. *False witness.* Giving wrong testi-

ceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies :

20 These are the things which defile a man : but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

21 ¶ Then <sup>1</sup> Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And, behold, a woman of

<sup>1</sup> Mark vii. 24.

mony. Concealing the truth, or stating what we know to be false, contrary to the ninth commandment. It proceeds from a desire to injure others, to take away their character or property, or to do them injustice. It proceeds thus from the heart. 6. *Blasphemies*. See Note, Matt. ix. 3. Blasphemy proceeds from opposition to God, hatred of his character, Rom. viii. 7, and from a desire that there should be no God. It proceeds from the heart. See Psa. xiv. 1. Mark adds, 7. *Covetousness*, always proceeding from the heart—the unlawful desire of what others possess. 8. *Wickedness*. The original here means malice, or a desire of injuring others. Rom. i. 29. 9. *Deceit* ; i. e., fraud, concealment, cheating in trade. This proceeds from a desire to benefit ourselves by doing injustice to others, and thus proceeds from the heart. 10. *Lasciviousness*. Lust, obscenity, unbridled passion—a strong, evil desire of the heart. 11. *An evil eye*. That is, an eye sour, malignant, proud, devising or purposing evil. See Matt. v. 28 ; xx. 15. 2 Pet. ii. 14. “ Having eyes full of adultery, that cannot cease from sin.” 12. *Pride*. An improper estimate of our own importance—thinking that we are of much more consequence than we really are—always the work of an evil heart. 13. *Foolishness*. Not want of intellect. Man is not to blame for that. But moral folly, consisting in choosing bad ends, and bad means of gaining them ; or, in other words, sin and wickedness. All sin is folly. It is foolish for a man to disobey God ; and foolish for any one to go to hell. These things defile a man. What an array of crimes to proceed from the heart of man ! What a proof of guilt ! What strictness is there in the law of God ! How universal is depravity !

Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David ; <sup>2</sup> my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a word.<sup>3</sup> And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away ; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said,

<sup>2</sup> Mark ix. 17—23. Luke xviii. 38, 39. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxviii. 1. Lam. iii. 8.

21—28. This narrative is also found in Mark vii. 24—30. ¶ *The coasts of Tyre and Sidon*. These cities were on the sea-coast or shore of the Mediterranean. See Note, Matt. xi. 21. He went there for the purpose of concealment, Mark vii. 24, perhaps still to avoid Herod.

22. *A woman of Canaan*. This woman is called also a Greek, a Syro-Phœnician by birth, Mark vii. 26. Anciently the whole land, including Tyre and Sidon, was in the possession of the Canaanites, and was called Canaan. The Phœnicians were descended from the Canaanites. The country, including Tyre and Sidon, was called Phœnicia, or Syro-Phœnicia. That country was taken by the Greeks under Alexander the Great, and those cities in the time of Christ were Greek cities. This woman was therefore a Gentile, living under the Greek government, and probably speaking the Greek language. She was by birth a Syro-Phœnician, born in that country, and descended therefore, from the ancient Canaanites. All these names might with propriety be given to her. ¶ *Coasts*. Regions, or countries. ¶ *Thou Son of David*. Descendant of David. See Note, Matt. i. 1. Meaning the Messiah. ¶ *Is grievously vexed with a devil*. See Note, Matt. iv. 24. The woman showed great earnestness. She cried unto him and fell at his feet, Mark vii. 25.

23. *But he answered her not a word*. This was done to test her faith, and that there might be exhibited to the apostles an example of the effect of persevering supplication. The result shows that it was not unwillingness to aid her, or neglect of her. It was proper that the strength of her faith should be fully tried.

24. *But he answered, I am not sent*, &c. This answer was made to the woman,

<sup>1</sup> I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.<sup>2</sup>

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

28 Then <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be <sup>4</sup> it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter

was made whole from that very<sup>5</sup> hour.

29 And <sup>6</sup> Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:*<sup>7</sup>

31 Inasmuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 5, 6. Acts iii. 26. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 6. Rev. xxii. 15. <sup>3</sup> Job xlii. 15; xxiii. 10. Lam. iii. 32. <sup>4</sup> Psa. cxlv. 19.

<sup>5</sup> John iv. 50—53. <sup>6</sup> Mark vii. 31. <sup>7</sup> Ps. ciii. 3. Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

not to the disciples. The lost sheep of the house of Israel were the Jews. He came first to them. He came as their expected Messiah. He came to preach the gospel himself to the Jews only. Afterwards it was preached to the Gentiles; but the ministry of Jesus was confined almost entirely to the Jews.

25. *She came and worshipped.* That is, bowed down to him, did him reverence. See Note, Matt. viii. 2. ¶ *Lord help me.* A proper cry for a poor sinner, who needs the help of the Lord Jesus.

26. *But he answered and said, It is not meet, &c.* That is, it is not fit or proper.

¶ *Children's bread.* The Jews considered themselves as the peculiar children of God. To all other nations they were accustomed to apply terms of contempt, of which *dogs* was the most common. The Mohammedans still apply the term *dogs* to Christians, and Christians and Jews sometimes to each other, and then it is designed as an expression of the highest contempt. The Saviour meant to say that he was sent to the Jews. The woman was a Gentile. It did not comport with the design of his personal ministry, to apply benefits intended for the Jews to others.

Our Saviour did not intend to justify or sanction the use of such terms, or calling names. He meant to try the woman's faith. As if he had said: You are a Gentile, I am a Jew. The Jews call themselves children of God. You they vilify, and abuse, calling you a dog. Are you willing to receive

of a Jew, then, a favour? Are you willing to submit to these appellations, to receive a favour from one of that nation, and to acknowledge your dependence on a people that so despise you. It was as a trial of her faith, and not to lend his sanction to the propriety of the abusive term. He regarded her with a different feeling.

27. *And she said, Truth, Lord, &c.* What you say is true. Let it be that the best food should be given to the children. Let the Jews have the chief benefit of thy ministry. But the dogs, beneath the table, eat the crumbs. So let me be regarded as a dog, a heathen, as unworthy of every thing. Yet grant one exertion of that almighty power, displayed so signally among the Jews, and heal the despised daughter of a despised heathen mother.

28. *Great is thy faith.* That is, thy trust, confidence. The word here seems to include, also, the humility and perseverance manifested in pressing her suit. The daughter was healed then. Going home, she found her well and composed. Mark vii. 31.

29—31. *Sea of Galilee.* That is, the lake of Gennesaret. For an account of the principal diseases mentioned here, see Note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *Maimed.* Those to whom a hand or foot was wanting. See Matt. xviii. 8. To cure them—that is, to restore a hand or foot—was a direct act of creative power. It is no wonder, therefore, that the people wondered. ¶ *And they glorified the God of Israel.* To glorify, here means to praise, to acknowledge his power and goodness.

A.D. 32.

## CHAPTER XV. *Near the lake of Galilee.*

to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 ¶ Then <sup>1</sup>Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33 And <sup>2</sup>his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And

they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And <sup>3</sup>he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and <sup>4</sup>gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full.<sup>5</sup>

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

39 And he sent away the

<sup>1</sup> Mark viii. 1—9.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kin. iv. 43, 44.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xiv. 19—21. <sup>4</sup> 1 Sam. ix. 13. Luke xxii. 19; xxiv. 30 <sup>5</sup> Ch. xvi. 8, 10.

The God of Israel was the God that the Israelites or Jews worshipped.

32—39. The miracle recorded here, the feeding of the seven thousand, took place on a mountain, near the sea of Galilee. The same account is recorded in Mark viii. 1—10. The circumstances of the miracle are so similar to the one recorded in Matt. xiv. 14—21, as to need no particular explanation.

32. *Three days, and have nothing to eat.* This is not, perhaps, to be taken literally, but only that during that time they had been deprived of their ordinary, regular food. They had had only a very scanty supply, and on the third day even that began to fail.

39. *Coasts of Magdala.* Mark says, *The parts of Dalmanutha.* Magdala and Dalmanutha were probably small towns on the east side of the sea of Galilee, and near to each other. The evangelists do not say that he went to either of those towns, but only to the *coasts*, or *parts*, where they were situated.

### REMARKS.

We learn from this chapter,

I. That men are often far more attached to traditions, and to the commandments of men, than to the law of God. Ver. 1—6.

II. That men are strongly disposed to explain away the law of God, if possible. It is too strict for them, and too spiritual. They dare not *often* attack it directly,

but they will explain it and dilute it so as to make it mean nothing. Wicked men do not love God's law. Ver. 4—6.

III. Men are prone to introduce foolish rites into religion. They do not love what God has commanded, and they attempt to compensate for not loving his doctrines by being great sticklers for their own. Ver. 2. Mark vii. 3, 4.

IV. All addition to the law of God is evil. Ver. 3. All ceremonies in religion, which are not authorized by the New Testament, are wrong. Man has no right to ordain rites to bind the conscience where God has commanded none. Col. ii. 23. Men come the nearest to that which is right when they live nearest to just what God has commanded in the Bible.

V. Hypocrites should be unmasked and detected. Ver. 7. He does a great service to men who detects their hypocrisy. That close and faithful preaching which lays open the heart, and shows men what they are, is that which comes nearest to the example of Christ. It may pain them, but the wounds of a friend are faithful, Prov. xxvii. 6; and we should honour and love the man that, by the grace of God, can show us our heart. We always honour most the physician of the body that is most skilled in detecting and curing disease; and so should we the physician of the soul.

VI. We should be exceedingly cautious

multitude, and took ship, and <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mark viii. 10.

came into the coasts of Magdala.

against formality in worship. Ver. 8, 9. It is hypocrisy. God requires the heart. To render to him only the service of the lips is to mock him. Nothing can be acceptable but true piety, genuine love, and hearty obedience. Nothing is more hateful than an appearance of worshipping God, while the heart is in sin and the world.

VII. The duty of honouring parents. Ver. 4—6. Nothing can explain away this duty. It is binding on all. Parents should be obeyed, loved, respected. God requires it, and we cannot be free from the duty. Under age, a child is bound always to obey a parent, where the parent does not command any thing contrary to the Bible. But when the parent commands any thing contrary to the Bible, the child is not bound to obey. Acts v. 29. After the child is of age he is to respect, love, and honour his parents; and, if they be poor and needy, to provide for their wants till they die. It is certainly proper that we do all we can to comfort those in old age, who did so much for us in childhood. A child can never repay his parents for their kindness to him.

VIII. We are not at liberty to give to any thing else, not even to religious uses, what is necessary to render our parents comfortable. Ver. 4—6. They have the first claim on us. And though it is our duty to do much in the cause of benevolence, yet it is our first duty to see that our parents do not suffer.

IX. Men easily take offence when they are faithfully reprov'd, and when their hypocrisy is exposed; and especially if this exposure is about some small matter, on which they have greatly set their hearts—some ceremony in worship, or some foolish rite. Ver. 12.

X. Every false doctrine is to be opposed, and shall be rooted up. Ver. 13. It is to be opposed by arguments and candid investigation, and not by abuse and misrepresentation. Christ never misrepresented any man's doctrine. He always stated it just as it was, just as they held it; and then, by argument and the word of God, he showed that it was wrong. This is the proper way to manage all controversies.

XI. It is of great importance to search the heart. Ver. 19, 20. It is a fountain of evil. It is the source of all crime. External conduct is comparatively of little importance. In the sight of God the heart is of more importance; and if that were pure, all would be well.

XII. The doctrine of man's depravity is true. Ver. 19. If the heart produces all these things, it cannot be pure. And yet who is there, from whose heart, at some time, these things have not proceeded? Alas! The world is full of instances where the heart produces evil thoughts, &c.

XIII. In our distress, and the distress of our children and friends, we should go to Jesus. We should, indeed, use all proper means for restoration; but we should feel that God only can grant returning health and life. Ver. 22.

XIV. We should not be discouraged that our prayers are not immediately answered. God knows the proper time to answer them, and it may be of great importance to us that the answer should be deferred. Ver. 23.

XV. We should still persevere. Ver. 24—27. We should not be discouraged. We should not be disheartened, even by the appearance of neglect or unkind treatment.

XVI. Our prayers will be answered, if we persevere. Ver. 28. They that seek shall find. In due time—in the best and most proper time—a gracious God will lend an ear to our request, and grant the thing we need.

XVII. We should pray with humility and faith. Ver. 27. We can never think too little of ourselves, or too much of the mercy and faithfulness of Christ. Prayers of humility and faith only are answered.

XVIII. Christ will take care of his poor and needy followers. We may be assured that he has power to give us all we need; and that in times of necessity he will supply our wants. Ver. 32—38.

XIX. The great number of poor in the world is no reason why he should not supply them. Ver. 38. He daily supplies the wants of nine hundred millions of human beings, besides countless numbers of the beasts of the field, of the fowl

## CHAPTER XVI.

and of a sign rebuked, 1—4.  
 of Pharisees and Sadducees,  
*Opinions about Jesus*, 13, 14.  
*Peter's confession and his ho-*  
*nings and rebukes Peter*, 21—23.  
*ness of the soul*, 24—28.

Pharisees also with the  
 Sadducees came, <sup>1</sup> and <sup>2</sup> tempt-  
 ed him that he would  
 send a sign <sup>3</sup> from heaven.

He answered and said unto  
 them When it is evening, ye say,

1. 15, 23, 34. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xix. 3. Mark  
 15. Luke x. 25; xi. 53, 54. <sup>3</sup> Ch.  
 Mark viii. 11—13. Luke xi. 16; xii.  
 Cor. i. 22.

ye, and the fishes of the sea. It  
 is he that supplyeth the wants of the  
 fish on the earth; and he who feeds  
 the fish, will take care of us in the time

We should be grateful to God for  
 food. We should render to him  
 thanksgiving. Ver. 36.

## CHAPTER XVI.

See also Mark viii. 11, 12. *The  
 Pharisees and the Sadducees.* See  
 Matt. iii. 7. ¶ *Tempting.* That  
 he—feigning a desire to see  
 that he was the Messiah, but  
 real desire to see him make the  
 attempt to work a miracle and fail, that  
 might betray and ruin him. ¶ *A  
 sign from heaven.* Some miraculous  
 signs in the sky. Such appearances  
 were given by the prophets; and they  
 believed, if Jesus was the Messiah, that his  
 power would not all be confined to the  
 earth, that he was able to give some  
 miracle from heaven. Samuel had  
 power to thunder, 1 Sam. xii. 16—18;  
 and caused the shadow to go back-  
 ward on the dial of Ahaz, Isa.  
 38; and Moses had sent them  
 down from heaven. Exod. xvi. 4. John  
 It is proper to say, that though  
 he did not choose then to show such  
 signs, yet far more stupendous signs  
 were given than these were exhibited at  
 this time.

He answered, &c. The mean-  
 ing of this answer is, there are certain

*It will be fair weather: for the sky  
 is red.*

3 And in the morning, *It will be  
 foul weather to-day: for the sky is  
 red and lowering.* O ye hypocrites,  
 ye can discern the face of the sky;  
 but can ye not discern the signs of  
 the times? <sup>4</sup>

4 A wicked and adulterous gener-  
 ation seeketh after a sign; and  
 there shall no sign be given unto  
 it, but the sign of the prophet  
 Jonas. <sup>5</sup> And he left them, and de-  
 parted.

5 And when his disciples were  
 in the boat, he said unto them, ¶ *Take  
 heed to yourselves, lest ye forget to take bread.*

indications by which you judge about the  
 weather. In the evening you think you  
 can predict the weather to-morrow. You  
 have evidence in the redness of the sky  
 by which you judge. So there are suffi-  
 cient indications on which you should  
 judge concerning me and these times.  
 My miracles, and the state of affairs in  
 Judea, are an indication by which you  
 should judge of these times. ¶ *Is red.*  
 Almost all nations have observed this as  
 an indication of the weather. ¶ *In the  
 morning—the sky is red and lowering.*  
 That is, there are threatening clouds in  
 the sky, which are made red by the rays  
 of the rising sun. This, in Judea, was a  
 sign of a tempest. In other places, how-  
 ever, the signs of a storm may be different.  
 ¶ *The face of the sky.* The appearance  
 of the sky.

4. *A wicked and adulterous generation,*  
 &c. See Note, Matt. xii. 38—40. Mark  
 adds, ch. viii. 12, that he sighed deeply  
 in spirit. He did not say this without  
 feeling, he was greatly affected with their  
 perverseness and obstinacy, 5—12. This  
 account is recorded also in Mark viii. 13  
 —21.

5. *And when his disciples had come to  
 the other side.* That is, to the other side  
 of the sea of Galilee. Mark says that  
 he entered into a ship again, and de-  
 parted to the other side. The conversation  
 with the Pharisees and Sadducees had  
 been on the east of the sea of Galilee. They  
 crossed from that side again to the west.  
 ¶ *Had forgotten to take bread.* That



come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 ¶ Then Jesus said unto them, <sup>1</sup> Take heed and beware of the leaven <sup>2</sup> of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying. *It is because we have taken no bread.*

8 Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, <sup>3</sup> O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five <sup>4</sup> loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

<sup>1</sup> Luke xii. 1. <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. v. 6—8. Gal. v. 9. <sup>3</sup> Tim. ii. 16, 17. <sup>4</sup> Ch. vi. 30; viii. 26; xiv. 31. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiv. 19—21.

is, had forgotten to lay in a sufficient supply. They had, it seems, not more than one loaf. Mark viii. 14.

6—8. *Take heed, &c.* That is, be cautious, be on your guard. ¶ *The leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.* Leaven is used in making bread. Its use is to pass through the flour, and cause it to ferment or to swell, and become light. It passes secretly, silently, but certainly. None can see its progress. So it was with the doctrines of the Pharisees. They were insinuating, artful, plausible. They concealed the real tendency of their doctrines, they instilled them secretly into the mind, and they pervaded all the faculties, like leaven. ¶ *They reasoned, &c.* The disciples did not understand him as referring to their doctrine, because the word *leaven* was not often used among the Jews to denote doctrines, no other instance of the use of the word occurring in the scriptures. Besides, the Jews had many particular rules about the leaven which might be used in making bread. Many held that it was not lawful to eat bread made by the Gentiles; and the disciples, perhaps, supposed that he was cautioning them not to procure a supply from the Pharisees and Sadducees. ¶ *O ye of little faith!* Jesus, in reply, said that *they should not be so anxious about the*

10 Neither the seven <sup>5</sup> loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine <sup>6</sup> of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom <sup>7</sup> do men say that I the Son of man am?

<sup>5</sup> Ch. xv. 34—38. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xv. 1—9. <sup>7</sup> Mark viii. 27. Luke ix. 18—22.

supply of their wants. They should not have supposed, after the miracles that he had wrought in feeding so many, that he would caution them to be anxious about procuring bread for their necessities. It was improper, then, for them to reason about a thing like that, but they should have supposed he referred to something more important. The miracles had been full proof that he could supply all their wants without such anxiety.

12. *Then understood they, &c.* After this explanation, they immediately saw that he referred to their doctrines. Erroneous doctrines are like leaven in the following respects: 1. They are at first slight and unimportant in appearance. 2. They are insinuated into the soul unawares and silently, and are difficult of detection. 3. They act gradually. 4. They act most certainly. 5. They will pervade all the soul, and bring in all the faculties under their control.

13—20. See also Mark viii. 27—29; and Luke ix. 18—20. ¶ *Cæsarea Philippi.* There were two cities in Judea called Cæsarea. One was situated on the borders of the Mediterranean, and the other was the one mentioned here. It was also called Paneas, was greatly enlarged and ornamented by Philip the tetrarch, son of Herod, and called Cæsarea, in

14 And they said, <sup>1</sup> Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiv. 2. Luke ix. 7-9.

honour of the Roman emperor, Tiberius Cæsar. To distinguish it from the other Cæsarea, the name of Philip was added to it, and called Cæsarea Philippi, or Cæsarea of Philip. It was situated in the boundaries of the tribe of Naphthali, near mount Lebanon, and was in the most northern part of Judea. It now contains about two hundred houses, and is inhabited chiefly by Turks. ¶ *When Jesus came.* The original is, *When Jesus was coming.* Mark says, ch. viii. 27, that this conversation took place when they were in the way, and this idea should have been retained in translating Matthew. While in the way, Jesus took occasion to call their attention to the truth that he was the Messiah. This truth it was of much consequence that they should fully believe and understand; and it was important, therefore, that he should often learn their views, and establish them if right, and correct them if wrong. He began, therefore, by inquiring what was the common report respecting him. ¶ *Whom do men say, &c.* This passage has been variously rendered. Some have translated it, *Whom do men say that I am? The Son of man? Others, Whom do men say that I am—I, who am the Son of man—i. e. the Messiah!* The meaning of all is nearly the same. He wished to obtain the sentiments of the people respecting himself.

14. *And they said, &c.* See Note, Matt. xi. 14. They supposed he might be John the Baptist, as Herod did, risen from the dead. See Matt. xiv. 2. He performed many miracles, and strongly resembled John in his manner of life, and in the doctrines which he taught.

16. *And Simon Peter answered, &c.* Peter, expressing the views of the apostles, with characteristic forwardness answered the question proposed to them by Jesus: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¶ *The Christ.* The Messiah, the Anointed of God. Note, Matt.

and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for <sup>3</sup> flesh and blood hath

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 33. Psa. ii. 7. John i. 49. Acts ix. 20. Heb. i. 2, 5. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 10. Gal. i. 16. Eph. ii. 8.

i. 1. ¶ *The Son.* That is, the Son by way of eminence, in a peculiar sense. Note, Matt. iii. 17. This appellation was understood as implying divinity, John x. 29-36. ¶ *Of the living God.* The term *living*, was given to the true God, to distinguish him from idols that are dead, or lifeless—blocks and stones. He is also the source of life, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. The term *living* is often given to him in the Old Testament, Josh. iii. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 36. Jer. x. 9, 10, &c. In this noble confession, Peter expressed the full belief of himself and his brethren that he was the long expected Messiah. Other men had very different opinions of him, but they were satisfied, and were not ashamed to confess it.

17. *And Jesus answered, Blessed art thou, &c.* Simon Bar-jona is the same as Simon son of Jona. Bar is a Syriac word, signifying son. The father of Peter, therefore Jona, or Jonas John i. 42; xxi. 16, 17. ¶ *Blessed.* That is, happy, honoured, evincing a proper spirit, and entitled to the approbation of God. ¶ *For flesh and blood.* This phrase commonly signifies man. See Gal. i. 16. Eph. vi. 12. And it has been commonly supposed that he meant to say that man had not revealed it. But Jesus seems rather to have referred to himself. This truth you have not learned from my lowly appearance, from my human nature, from my apparent rank and standing in the world. You, Jews, were expecting to know the Messiah by his external splendour, his pomp and power as a man. But you have not learned me in this manner. I have shown no such indication of my Messiahship. Flesh and blood have not shown it. In spite of appearances in my lowly state, my want of resemblance to what you have expected, you have been taught what I am by God. This they had been taught by his miracles, his instructions, and the direct teachings of God on their minds. To

not revealed it unto thee, but <sup>1</sup> my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, <sup>2</sup> and <sup>3</sup> upon

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 15; v. 20. <sup>2</sup> John i. 42. <sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14.

reveal is to make known, or communicate something that was unknown, or secret.

18. *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter.* The word *Peter*, in Greek, means a rock. The name was given to Simon by Christ when he called him to be a disciple. John i. 42. *Cephas* is a Syriac word, meaning the same as *Peter*—a rock, or stone. The meaning of this phrase may be thus expressed: 'Thou, in saying that I am the Son of God, hast called me by a name expressive of my true character. I, also, have given to thee a name expressive of your character. I have called you *Peter, a rock*, denoting firmness, solidity, and your confession has shown that the name is appropriate. I see that you are worthy of the name, and will be a distinguished support of my religion. ¶ *And upon this rock, &c.* This passage has given rise to many different interpretations. Some have supposed that the word *rock* refers to Peter's confession; and that he meant to say, upon this rock, this truth that thou hast confessed that I am the Messiah, and upon confessions of this from all believers, I will build my church. Confessions like this shall be the test of piety, and in such confessions shall my church stand amidst the flames of persecution, the fury of the gates of hell. Others have thought that he referred to himself. Christ is called a rock, Isa. xxviii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 4—8. And it has been thought that he turned from Peter to himself, and said: Upon this rock, this truth that I am the Messiah—upon myself as the Messiah, I will build my church. Both these interpretations, though plausible, seem forced upon the passage to avoid the main difficulty in it. Another interpretation is, that the word *rock* refers to Peter himself. This is the obvious meaning of the passage; and had it not been that the church of Rome has abused it, and applied it to what was never intended, no other would have been sought for. Thou art a rock. Thou hast shown thyself firm, and prepared to receive the foundation of the church.

this rock I will build my church; and the gates <sup>4</sup> of hell shall not prevail <sup>5</sup> against it.

<sup>4</sup> Deut. xxi. 19. Psa. ix. 13. Lam. v. 14. Zech. viii. 16. <sup>5</sup> Isa. lii. 17.

Upon thee will I build it. Thou shalt be highly honoured; thou shalt be first in making known the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. This was accomplished. See Acts ii. 14—36, where he first preached to the Jews; and Acts x. where he preached the gospel to Cornelius and his neighbours, who were Gentiles. Peter had thus the honour of laying the foundation of the church among the Jews and Gentiles. And this is the plain meaning of this passage. See also Gal. ii. 2. But Christ did not mean, as the Roman Catholics say he did, to exalt Peter to supreme authority above all the other apostles, or to say that he was the only one on whom he would rear his church. See Acts xv, where the advice of James, and not of Peter, was followed. See also Gal. ii. 11, where Paul withstood Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed; a thing which could not have happened if Christ, as the Roman Catholics say, meant that Peter should be absolute and infallible. More than all, it is not said here or any where else in the Bible, that Peter should have infallible successors who should be the vicegerents of Christ, and the head of the church. The whole meaning of the passage is this: I will make you the honoured instrument of making known my gospel first to Jews and Gentiles, and will make you a firm and distinguished preacher in building my church. ¶ *Will build my church.* This refers to the custom of building in Judea on a rock or other very firm foundation. See Note, Matt. vii. 24. The word for *church*, is literally, *those called out*, and often means an assembly or congregation. See Acts vii. 38; xix. 32, (Greek.) It is applied to Christians as being called out from the world. It means, sometimes, the whole body of believers. 1 Cor. x. 32. Eph. i. 22. This is its meaning in this place. It means, also, a particular society of believers, worshipping in one place. Acts viii. 1; ix. 31. 1 Cor. i. 2. Sometimes, also, a society in a single house, as Rom. xvi. 5. In common language, it means the church visible, i. e. all who profess religion; or

or not. *And the gates of hell*, ancient cities were surrounded by in the gates, by which they were were the principal places for courts, transacting business, and ing on public matters. The word *therefore*, is used for counsels, de- chinations, evil purposes. *¶ Hell* *here*, the place of departed spirits, uly evil spirits. And the mean- *no passage* is, that all the plots, ns, and machinations of the ene- the church, should not be able to e it; a promise that has been bly fulfilled.

*And I will give unto thee, &c.* is an instrument for opening a *ke* that is in possession of it has *er of access*, and has a general d administration of a house. in the Bible, a key is used as a *of superintendence*, an emblem of nd authority. See Isa. xxii. 22; 18; iii. 7. The *kingdom of* here means, doubtless, the church . See Note, Matt. iii. 2. When aid, therefore, *I will give unto* *keys of the kingdom of heaven*, he ut he would make Peter the in- t of opening the door of faith to the

sabbath-day: "The school of Shammai binds it;" i. e. forbid it;—"the school of Hillel looses it;" i. e. allows it. When Jesus gave this power to the apostles, he meant that whatsoever they forbade in the church should have divine authority; whatever they permitted, or commanded, should also have divine authority; that is, should be bound or loosed in heaven, or meet the approbation of God. They were to be guided infallibly in the or- ganization of the church, 1. By the teaching of Christ; and, 2. By the teach- ing of the Holy Spirit.

This does not refer to persons, but to things—*whatsoever*, not whosoever. It refers to rites and ceremonies in the church. Such of the jewish customs as they should forbid were to be forbidden; and such as they thought proper to permit were to be allowed. Such rites as they should appoint in the church were to have the force of divine authority. Accordingly they forbade circumcision and the eating of things offered to idols, and strangled, and blood. Acts xv. 20. They founded the church, and ordained its rites, as of divine authority.

20. *Then charged, &c.* That is, he then commanded them. Mark, ch. viii.

of the elders and Chief Priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, <sup>1</sup> saying, <sup>2</sup> Be it far from thee, Lord : this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan :

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxvi. 51—53. John xiii. 6—8. <sup>2</sup> *Pity thyself.*

was the first intimation that he gave that he was to die in this cruel manner. He had taken much pains to convince them that he was the Messiah ; he saw by the confession of Peter that they were convinced ; and he then began to prepare their minds for the awful event which was before him. Had he declared this when he first called them, they would never have followed him. Their minds were not prepared for it. They expected a temporal, triumphant prince, as the Messiah. He first, therefore, convinced them that he was the Christ ; and then, with great prudence, began to correct their apprehensions of the proper character of the Messiah. ¶ *Elders.* The men of the great council, or Sanhedrim. See Note, Matt. v. 22. ¶ *Chief Priests and Scribes.* See Note, Matt. ii. 4.

22. *Then Peter took him.* This may mean, either to interrupt him, or to take him aside, or to take him by the hand, as a friend. This latter is probably the true meaning. Peter was strongly attached to him. He could not bear to think of his death. He expected, moreover, that he would be the triumphant Messiah. He could not hear, therefore, that his death was so near. In his ardour, and confidence, and strong attachment, he seized him by the hand as a friend, and said, "Be it far from thee." This phrase might have been translated, *God be merciful to thee ; this shall not be unto thee.* It expressed Peter's strong desire that it might not be. The word *rebuke* here means to admonish or earnestly to entreat, as in Luke xvii. 3. It does not mean that Peter assumed authority over Christ ; but that he earnestly expressed his wish that it might not be so. Even this was improper. He should have been *submissive* and not have interfered.

<sup>3</sup> thou art an offence <sup>4</sup> unto me : for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any <sup>5</sup> man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Sam. xix. 22. <sup>4</sup> Rom. xiv. 13. <sup>5</sup> Ch. x. 38. Mark viii. 34. Luke ix. 23 ; xiv. 27. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Thess. iii. 3.

23. *Get thee behind me, Satan.* The word *Satan* means literally an adversary, or one that opposes us in the accomplishment of our designs. It is applied to the devil commonly, as the opposer or adversary of man. But there is no evidence that the Lord Jesus meant to apply this term to Peter, as signifying that he was Satan or the devil, or that he used the term in anger. He may have used it in the general sense which the word bears as an adversary or opposer ; and the meaning may be, that such sentiments as Peter expressed then were opposed to him and his plans. His interference was improper. His views and feelings stood in the way of the accomplishment of the Saviour's designs. There was undoubtedly a rebuke in this language ; for the conduct of Peter was improper ; but the idea which is commonly attached to it, and which, perhaps, our translation conveys, implies a more severe and harsh rebuke than the Saviour intended, and than the language which he used would express. ¶ *Thou art an offence.* That is, a stumbling-block. Your advice and wishes are in my way. If followed, they would prevent the very thing for which I came. ¶ *Thou savourest not.* That is, thou thinkest not. You think that those things should not be done, which God wishes to be done. You judge of this matter as men do, who are desirous of honour ; and not as God, who sees it best that I should die, to promote the great interests of mankind.

24—28. This discourse is also recorded in Mark viii. 34—38 ; ix. 1 ; and Luke ix. 23—27. ¶ *Let him deny himself.* That is, let him surrender to God his will, affections, body, and soul. Let him not seek his own happiness as the supreme object, but be willing to renounce all, and

25 For <sup>1</sup> whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or <sup>2</sup> what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

<sup>1</sup> John xii. 25. Est. iv. 14. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xlix. 7, 8.

lay down his life also, if required. ¶ *Take up his cross.* See Note, Matt. x. 38.

25. *Whosoever will save his life, &c.* See Note, Matt. x. 39.

26. *For what is a man profited, &c.* To gain the whole world means to possess it as our own—all its riches, honours, and pleasures. To lose his own soul means to be cast away, to be shut out from heaven, to be sent to hell. Two things are implied by Christ in these questions: 1. That they who are striving to gain the world, and are unwilling to give it up for the sake of religion, will lose their souls; and, 2. That if the soul is lost, nothing can be given in exchange for it, nor can it ever afterwards be saved. There is no redemption in hell.

27. *For the Son of man, &c.* That is, the Lord Jesus Christ shall return to judge the world. He will come in glory—the glory of his Father—the majesty with which God is accustomed to appear, and which befits God. He will be attended by angels. He will judge all men. ¶ *Reward.* The word reward means recompense, or do justice to. He will deal with them according to their character. The righteous he will reward in heaven, with glory and happiness. The wicked he will send to hell, as a reward or recompense for their evil works. This fact, that he will come to judgment, he gives as a reason why we should be willing to deny ourselves and follow him. Even though now this should be attended with contempt and suffering, yet then he will reward his followers for all their shame and sorrows, and receive them to his kingdom. Christ adds, Mark viii. 38, that if we are ashamed of him here, he will be ashamed of us there. That is, if we reject and disown him here, he will reject and disown us there.

28. *Verily I say unto you, &c.* To encourage the disciples, he assured them that though his kingdom was now obscure and

27 For <sup>3</sup> the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and <sup>4</sup> then he shall reward every man according to his works.

28 Verily I say unto you, There

<sup>3</sup> Dan. vii. 9, 10. Zech. xiv. 5. Jude 14.  
<sup>4</sup> Rev. xxii. 12.

despised—though he was cast out and little known—yet the time was near when he should be regarded in a different manner, and his kingdom should be established with great power. This cannot refer to the end of the world, and there is no need of referring it to the destruction of Jerusalem. ¶ *Taste of death.* That is, die. Before they die they shall see this. ¶ *Son of man coming in his kingdom.* Mark and Luke have explained this. Mark, ix. 1: "Until they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Luke, ix. 27: "Till they see the kingdom of God." The meaning evidently is, till they should see my kingdom, i. e. my church, now small, feeble, and despised, greatly enlarged, established, and spreading with great rapidity and extent. All this was accomplished. All these apostles, except Judas, lived to see the wonders of the day of Pentecost; some of them, John particularly, saw the Jewish nation scattered, the temple destroyed, the gospel established in Asia, Rome, Greece, and in a large part of the known world.

#### REMARKS.

I. Men will often judge far more correctly about natural than spiritual things. Ver. 1—3. About natural objects they are watchful. In them they feel a deep interest. And they watch for every sign that may affect their interest. They are too much concerned to judge falsely. But they feel no such interest in religious things. Hence it happens that men who have good sense, and much wisdom in regard to worldly concerns, are exceedingly foolish in regard to religion. They often believe reports respecting religion, revivals, and missions, which they would despise on any other subject. They read and believe newspapers and other publications, which they would hold in contempt on any other topic but religion.

II. It is of importance to watch the

*The kingdom not far off.* MATTHEW.

A.D. 32.

<sup>1</sup> be some standing here, which shall not taste <sup>2</sup> of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix. 1.    <sup>2</sup> Heb. ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. x. 23. Luke xxi. 27, 28.

signs of the times. Ver. 3. In the days of Christ, it was the duty of the people to look at the evidence that he was the Messiah. That evidence was plain. It is also important to look at the signs of the times in which we live. They are clear also. Much is doing; and the spread of the Bible, the labours among the heathen, the distribution of tracts, and perhaps above all, the institution of sabbath schools—all betoken an eventful age, and are an indication that brighter days are about to dawn on the world. We should watch these signs that we may rejoice, that we may pray with more fervour, and that we may do our part to advance the kingdom of God. Little children should grow up believing that they live in an important age, that they enjoy many peculiar privileges, and that they may and must do much to spread the gospel through the earth. Even when children, they should pray, and they should give to benefit others; and, most of all, they should give themselves to Christ, that they may benefit others with a right spirit.

III. Sinners should be addressed with deep feeling and faithfulness. Mark viii. 12. Jesus sighed deeply. So should we. We should not be harsh, or sour, or without feeling. We should weep over them, and pray for them, and speak to them, not as if we were better than they, but with an earnest desire for their salvation. Compare Acts xx. 31. Phil. iii. 18.

IV. Men easily mistake plain instruction. Ver. 7. And especially is this the case where there is any chance of giving a worldly turn to the instruction. If men's thoughts, even those of Christians were more off from the world, and they thought less of the supply of their wants, they would understand the truths of religion much better than they do. No man can understand the doctrines of religion aright, whose principal concern is what he shall eat, and drink, and wear. Hence even Christians are often strangely ignorant of the plainest truths of religion. And hence the importance of teaching those truths to children before their thoughts

become engrossed by the world. And hence, too, the importance of sabbath schools.

V. We should not have undue anxiety about the supply of our wants. Christ supplied many thousands by a word, and he can easily supply us. Ver. 9—12.

VI. We should learn, from his past goodness, to trust him for the future. Ver. 9—12.

VII. We should be on our guard against error. Ver. 11. It is sly, artful, plausible, working secretly, but effectually. We should always be cautious of what we believe, and examine it by the word of God. False doctrines are often made as much like the truth as possible, for the very purpose of deceiving. Satan is transformed into an angel of light.

VIII. It is important to ascertain our views of Christ. Ver. 13—15. It is our all. If we do not think and feel right respecting him, we cannot be safe. We should often, then, ask ourselves—we should ask one another—what we think of Christ.

IX. It is our duty to profess our attachment to Christ. It should be done boldly, and always. Ver. 16. We should never be ashamed of him. And to do this we should always, in our own hearts, believe that he is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

X. We should esteem it a great happiness and honour to be enabled thus to show our attachment to him. The world may not honour us, but God will, and will pronounce us blessed. Ver. 17.

XI. God only reveals this to us. Ver. 17. This he does by his word and Spirit. We should, then, search the Bible; and we should pray much that God would reveal his Son in us, and enable us boldly to confess him before men.

XII. The church is safe. Ver. 18. It may be small, it may be feeble, it may weep much, it may be much opposed and ridiculed, it may have mighty enemies, the rich and the great may set themselves against it, but it is safe. It is founded on a rock. All its enemies shall not overcome it. Jesus has promised it; and in all ages he has shown that he has re-

## CHAPTER XVII.

*transfiguration, 1—13. A lunatick  
slain, 14—21. Christ foretells his  
sufferings again, 22, 23. The tribute  
Capernaum paid, 24.*

bered his promise. It has not been  
et. It has been persecuted, opposed,  
slandered, and almost driven from the  
land; but a few have been found who  
loved the Lord; and soon the flame  
kindled, and the church has shone  
"fair as the sun, clear as the moon,  
terrible as an army with banners."  
is still. Feeble churches may mourn,  
anxiety may abound, and the  
pious people may weep in secret,  
but Jesus hears their groans, and  
their tears, and they and their  
loves are safe. He is their friend, and  
the powers of hell shall not prevail  
against them.

II. The importance of prudence in  
receiving truth. Ver. 21. It should be  
examined. It should be when people  
are spared to receive it. Especially is  
so of young converts. They have  
milk, and not of strong meat.  
should not be surprised that many  
verses of the Bible are mysterious now.  
They may fully comprehend them  
later. Peter, a young convert, did  
not understand the plain doctrine that  
must die for sin. Yet it was after-  
ward clear to him, and most cordially  
accepted it.

III. It is highly wicked and improper  
to tempt to counsel God, or to think  
we understand things better than he.  
Ver. 22, 23. His plan is the best.  
And though it does not fall in  
our views of wisdom, yet we should  
obey. It is all wise. And though what  
we know not now, yet we shall  
know hereafter.

We see what religion requires.  
I. We must deny ourselves. We  
submit to trials. We must do our  
duty. We must often suffer persecution.  
It will be, in all places, among all men,  
in every employment, Christians. No  
what may happen. Come poverty,  
persecution, death, it is ours to  
bear the cross and do our duty. So  
be, and martyrs, and the Saviour  
has gone before us. And we  
follow in their steps.

AND <sup>1</sup> after six days Jesus taketh  
Peter, James, and John his  
brother, and bringeth them up into  
an high mountain apart.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix. 2—10. Luke ix. 28—36. <sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. i. 18.

"Shall I be carried to the skies  
On flowery beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize,  
And sailed through bloody seas?  
"Sure I must fight, if I would reign!  
Increase my courage, Lord,  
To bear the cross, endure the shame,  
Supported by thy word."

XVI. How foolish are the men of this  
world! Ver. 26. In a little time how  
worthless will be all their wealth! It is  
gained by anxiety, and toil, and tears.  
It never satisfies. It harasses them with  
constant care. It smooths no wrinkles on  
their brow, alleviates no pain when they  
are sick, saves no friend from death, gives  
no consolation in regard to the future,  
and may be left at any moment. Others  
will soon possess, and perhaps scatter in  
dissipation, what they have obtained by  
so much toil. See Psa. xxxix. 6. And  
while they scatter or enjoy it, where shall  
the soul of him be who spent all his pro-  
bation to obtain it! Alas! lost, lost, lost!  
—for ever lost! And no wealth, no man,  
no devil, no angel, can redeem him, or be  
given for his soul. The harvest will be  
past, the summer ended, and he not  
saved. In gaining the world, he gained  
two things—disappointment and trouble  
here, and an eternity of woe hereafter.  
How foolish and wicked is man!

XVII. The righteous should rejoice  
that Jesus will come again to our world.  
He will reward them. Ver. 27. He will  
come as their friend, and they shall ascend  
with him to heaven.

XVIII. The wicked should weep and  
wail that Jesus will come again to our  
world. He will punish them for their  
crimes. Ver. 27. They cannot escape.  
See Rev. i. 7.

XIX. It will not be long before he will  
come. Ver. 28. At any rate, it will not  
be long before we shall meet him. Death  
is near. And then we must stand before  
him, and give an account of the deeds  
done in the body.

## CHAPTER XVII.

1—2. See also Mark ix. 2—10. Luke  
ix. 28—36.

1. And after six days. That is, six



2 And was transfigured <sup>1</sup> before them : and his face did shine <sup>2</sup> as

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xii. 2. Phil. ii. 6, 7, Greek. <sup>2</sup> Psa. civ. 2. Rev. i. 16.

days from the conversation recorded in the last chapter. Luke, ch. ix. 28, says, about an eight days after. Matthew mentions the six days that intervened between the day of the conversation and the transfiguration. Luke includes both those days, and thus reckons eight. Besides, Luke does not pretend to fix the precise time. In the Greek it is "about eight days after." ¶ *Taketh Peter, and James, and John.* These three disciples were with him also in the garden of Gethsemane. Mark xiv. 33. He designed to fit them, in an eminent degree, for the work of the gospel ministry, by the previous manifestations of his glory, and of his patience in suffering. ¶ *Into a high mountain apart.* That is, apart from the other disciples. It is commonly supposed that this was mount Tabor, a high mountain in Galilee. The name of the mountain is not, however, mentioned in the New Testament. Luke adds, ch. ix. 28, that Jesus went there to pray. Our Saviour prayed much. When he did it, he chose to be alone. For this purpose he often ascended mountains, or went into the deserts. There is something in the solitude and deep and awful stillness of a lofty mountain, favourable to devotion.

2. *And was transfigured before them.* The word *transfigure* means to change the appearance, or form. It does not denote the change of the substance of a thing, but simply of its appearance. It puts on a new aspect. What this change was, we are expressly told. 1. His face shone as the sun ; that is, with a peculiar brightness. A similar appearance is described respecting Moses when he came down from the mount. Ex. xxxiv. 29—35. See also Heb. i. 3, where Christ is called the brightness of the glory of God ;—in the original the splendour, or shining, like the brightness of the sun. 2. The second change was that of his garments. They were white as the light. Mark says, "white as snow, so as no fuller on earth could whiten them." The word *fuller* means commonly one who dresses cloth, or fulls it, so as to make it more thick and strong. Here it means one who bleaches cloth, or makes it white ; one who cleanses gar-

ments, when by wearing they become soiled. Among the Greeks that was a distinct trade. Luke says, white and glistening ; that is, resplendent, shining, or a very bright white. There is no evidence here that what is commonly said of him is true, that his body was so changed as to show what his glorified body is. His body, so far as the sacred writers inform us, underwent no change. All this splendour and glory was a change in appearance only. The scriptures should be taken just as they are, without any attempt to affix a meaning to them which the sacred writers did not intend. ¶ *Raiment.* Clothing. Apparel. John refers to this transfiguration in ch. i. 14 ; and Peter in his second Epistle, i. 16, 17.

3. *And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias.* Moses, a distinguished servant of God, by whom the law was given, and whose institutions typified the Messiah. It was particularly proper that he should appear, when his prophecies and types were about to be fulfilled, and his rites to be done away. Elias, or Elijah, a distinguished prophet, taken to heaven, without seeing death. See 2 Kings ii. 11. Elijah had been honoured eminently by being thus translated, and still more by being made the model of the forerunner of the Messiah. Mal. iv. 5. Matt. xi. 14. Luke i. 17. They appeared "in glory ;" Luke ix. 31, i. e., as they are in heaven—with the glory which the redeemed have there. ¶ *Talking with him.* Luke, ch. ix. 31, informs us that they conversed about his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. To redeemed spirits, that death was an object of intense interest. By faith in that death they had been saved ; and now that the Redeemer of mankind was about to die, it is no wonder that this was the burden of his and their thoughts.

Luke adds, ch. ix. 32, that Peter and they who were with him were heavy with sleep. It is not improbable that this was in the night ; that Jesus was engaged in prayer ; and that he had permitted his weary followers to compose themselves to rest. It was after they were awaked

## CHAPTER XVII. *Near Caesarea Philippi.*

**1** *Moses and Elias talking*

**2** *Jesus answered Peter, and*  
**3** *Jesus, Lord, it is good*  
**4** *be here: <sup>1</sup> if thou wilt, let*  
**5** *here three tabernacles; one*  
**6** *and one for Moses, and*  
**7** *Elias.*

**8** *Behold, a*  
**9** *cloud overshadowed them:*  
**10** *A voice <sup>2</sup> out of the*  
**11** *cloud said, This is my be-*

**1, 2.** John xvii. 24. **3** Ch.  
**11.** Luke iii. 22. **2** Pet.

*loved Son, in <sup>3</sup> whom I am well*  
*pleased; hear <sup>4</sup> ye him.*

**6** *And when the disciples heard*  
**7** *it, they fell on their face, and were*  
**8** *sore afraid.*

**7** *And Jesus came and touched*  
**8** *them, and said, Arise, and be not*  
**9** *afraid.*

**8** *And when they had lifted up*  
**9** *their eyes, they saw no man, save*  
**10** *Jesus only.*

**9** *And as they came down from*

**3** Isa. xlii. 1, 21. **4** Deut. xviii. 15, 18. Acts  
**11.** 22, 23. Heb. i. 1, 2; ii. 1-3. **5** Dan. x.  
**10, 18.** Rev. i. 17.

*to see this vision. Probably the*  
*cloud, the bright shining,*  
*came from sleep.*

**1** *make—three tabernacles. A*  
**2** *is a tent. It was commonly*  
**3** *erected on the ground,*  
**4** *on them cloths, fastened by*  
**5** *Notes on Isa. xxxiii. 20. In*  
**6** *visions, they were made of*  
**7** *clouds: they were made of*  
**8** *the sun and rain, not per-*  
**9** *manent. Peter was rejoiced at*  
**10** *and desirous of continuing it.*  
**11** *Therefore, that they should*  
**12** *interview, and dwell there.*  
**13** *That they knew not what they*  
**14** *prophesied this. They were*  
**15** *amazed, and rejoiced; and,*  
**16** *at the moment, they pro-*  
**17** *nounced there.*

**18** *cloud overshadowed them.*  
*overshadow here means, rather*  
*spread or spread over them. It*  
*means that it made a shade. A*  
*symbol of the divine presence.*  
*went before the Israelites in a*  
*cloud, dark by day, and bright*  
*by night. Exod. xiv. 19, 20; he appeared*  
*in a cloud bright by fire,*  
*Exod. xiii. 21-22; and a cloud, the*  
*divine presence, called the*  
*cloud of the Most High dwelt*  
*continually in the Most*  
*High in the temple. 1 Kings viii.*  
*1-2; x. 4. When, there-*  
*fore, the disciples saw this cloud, they*  
*were led to hear the word of the*  
*Most High, his beloved Son. This*  
*vision of God. This was the*  
*vision, in a remarkable manner,*

*God had declared this. See Matt. xiii. 17.*  
*This was spoken to confirm the disciples;*  
*to declare their duty to hear Christ,*  
*rather than any other, and to honour*  
*him more than Moses and Elijah; and to*  
*strengthen their faith in him when they*  
*should go forth to preach the gospel,*  
*after he was shamefully put to death.*  
*After this, it was impossible for them to*  
*doubt that he was truly the Son of God.*  
*See 2 Pet. i. 17, 18.*

**6.** *They fell on their faces. They*  
*entered into the cloud; or the cloud*  
*enveloped them. Luke ix. 34. They*  
*were therefore afraid. They were awed*  
*at the presence of God; and their fears*  
*were removed only by the voice of their*  
*beloved Master. No man can see God,*  
*and live. And it is only the glory of*  
*God, as it shines in the face of Christ,*  
*see 2 Cor. iv. 6, that mortals can bear.*

**9.** *Tell the vision to no man. This vision*  
*was designed particularly to confirm them*  
*in the truth that Jesus was the Messiah.*  
*While he was with them, it was unneces-*  
*sary that they should relate what they*  
*had seen. When he was crucified, they*  
*would need this evidence that he was the*  
*Christ. Then they were to use it. There*  
*were three witnesses of it, as many as*  
*the law required; and the proof that he*  
*was the Messiah was clear. Besides, if*  
*they had told it then, it would have pro-*  
*voked the Jews, and endangered his life.*  
*His time was not yet come. ¶ Vision.*  
*Sight; appearance. What they had*  
*seen on the mount. ¶ Charged them.*  
*Gave them a commandment.*

*The sole design of this transfiguration*

the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why<sup>1</sup> then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 14; xxvii. 47—49. Mal. iv. 5, 6. John i. 21—25.

was to convince the three disciples that he was the Christ; that he was greater than the greatest of the prophets; that he was the Son of God.

Mark adds, ch. ix. 10, "They kept this saying, questioning what the rising of the dead should mean." The Pharisees believed that the dead would rise; and there is no doubt that the disciples believed it. But their views were not clear. And in particular, they did not understand what Jesus meant by his rising from the dead. They do not appear to have understood, though he had told them, ch. xii. 40, that he would rise after three days.

10—13. See also Mark ix. 11—13. *Why then say the Scribes, &c.* The disciples appear to have been satisfied now, that he was the Messiah. The transfiguration had taken away all their doubts. But they recollected that it was a common doctrine among the Jews that Elijah should appear before the Messiah came; and they did not then recollect that he had appeared. To this difficulty the word *then* refers. 'We are satisfied that thou art the Christ. But Elijah has not yet come, as was expected. What, then, is the meaning of the common opinions of our learned men, the Scribes? Were they right or wrong in their expectation of Elijah?' See Note, Matt. xi. 14.

11. *Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.* He did not mean by this that Elijah was yet to come, for he directly tells them that he had come; but he meant to affirm that it was a true doctrine which the Scribes taught, that Elijah would appear before the coming of Messiah. To *restore* means to put into the former situation. See Matt. xii. 13. Hence it means, to heal, to correct, to put in proper order. Here it means that

12 But I say unto you, that Elias is come already,<sup>2</sup> and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer<sup>3</sup> of them.

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

14 ¶ And<sup>4</sup> when they were come

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xxi. 23—27, 32. John v. 33—35. Acts xlii. 24, 25. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 21. <sup>4</sup> Mark ix. 14—22. Luke ix. 37—42.

Elijah would put things in a proper state; be the instrument of reforming the people; of restoring them, in some measure, to proper notions about the Messiah, and preparing them for his coming. Before the coming of John, their views were erroneous, their expectations worldly, and their conduct exceedingly depraved. He corrected many of their notions about the Messiah, see Matt. iii., and was the instrument of an extensive reformation; and thus restored them, in some degree, to correct notions of their own economy and of the Messiah, and to a preparation for his advent.

12. *Elias is come.* That is, John the Baptist has come, in the spirit and power of Elias. See Luke i. 17. ¶ *They knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed.* The word *list* is an old English word, signifying to choose, to desire, to be inclined. See John iii. 8. It means, here, that they had done to John as they pleased; i. e. they had put him to death. Matt. xiv. 10.

Mark adds, ch. ix. 12, that Jesus told them that it was written of the Son of man that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. This was written of him particularly in Isaiah liii. To be set at nought, is to be esteemed as worthless, or as nothing; to be cast out and despised. No prophecy was ever more strikingly fulfilled. See Luke xxiii. 11.

14—21. This narrative, with some additions, is found in Mark ix. 14—29, and Luke ix. 37—43.

14. *And when they were come to the multitude.* This took place on the day following the transfiguration. Luke ix. 37. This multitude was probably composed of persons who had attended on his ministry, and many of whom were his real disciples.

to the multitude, there came to him a *certain man* kneeling down to him, and saying,

15 *Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.*

With them, as Mark, ch. ix. 14, informs us, were Scribes questioning with them. That is, they were probably professedly making inquiries about the Saviour, but really attempting to introduce their own sentiments, and to draw them off from him. They probably artfully asked them many questions about his birth, his family, his appearance, his manner of life, and his instructions, all which were contrary to the general expectation respecting the Messiah; and they intended, therefore, to insinuate that such a person could not be the Christ. The people were persuaded of it, and it would not have done to have attacked their opinions openly, but they attempted to gain the same point by sly insinuations. Error is always subtle, and often puts on the appearance of calm and honest inquiry. Well had he compared them to leaven. Matt. xvi. 11, 12. The multitude, seeing Jesus coming down, left the Scribes, and ran to meet him. (Mark). They were amazed, probably because they had not expected to see him there. In their joy at meeting him in this unexpected manner, they saluted him (Mark); i. e. they probably prostrated themselves before him, after the manner of salutation in eastern countries. See Note, Luke x. 4. Jesus, seeing the Scribes and their artful design, reproved them by asking them why they questioned thus with his disciples. Mark ix. 16. Conscious of their guilt, and their base purpose, they returned no answer. ¶ *A certain man kneeling to him.* That is, saluting him, or showing high regard for him. Note, Luke x. 4. It did not imply religious homage, but merely high respect and earnest entreaty.

15. *Lord, have mercy.* The word *Lord* here means, Sir, a title of civility, not implying divinity. ¶ *My son.* This was an only son. (Luke). He was possessed with a devil. This calamity was attended with the following symptoms: he was *lunatic*, see Note, Matt. iv. 24; he was

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.<sup>1</sup>

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you?

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. iv. 29—31. Acts iii. 13; xix. 14—16.

*sore vexed*, i. e. he suffered greatly, or was greatly afflicted; he fell often suddenly, in the manner of persons having epileptic fits; he was dumb, that is, he was dumb except when the fit was coming on him—for Luke says, that when the spirit took him, he cried suddenly out; he foamed and gnashed with his teeth, and wasted away, or became poor and emaciated. It tore him (Luke) and scarcely departed from him, or he had only short intervals of reason; for so the passage in Luke, “bruising him, hardly departeth from him,” should be translated.

16. *And I brought him to thy disciples, &c.* That is, not to the apostles, for they had power over unclean spirits, Matt. x. 8, but to others of his followers, who attempted to work miracles. It is probable that many of his disciples attempted this, who were not personal attendants on his ministry. Mark ix. 38.

17. *Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation!* *Perverse* means that which is twisted or turned from the proper direction; and is often used of the eyes, when one or both are turned from the natural position. Applied to a generation, or race of men, it means that they hold opinions turned or perverted from the truth, and that they were wicked in their conduct. He applied this probably to the Jews, and not to his real disciples. ¶ *How long shall I suffer you?* That is how long shall I bear with you. How long is it necessary to show such patience and forbearance with your unbelief and perversity. This was not an expression of impatience or complaint, so much as a reproof that they were so slow to believe that he was the Messiah, notwithstanding his miracles, and that even his disciples so slowly learned to put the proper trust in him.

Mark adds, ch. ix. 20—22, that when he that was possessed was brought, the spirit, by a last desperate struggle, threw

how long shall I suffer you?<sup>1</sup> bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them,

<sup>1</sup> Num. xiv. 11, 27. Jer. iv. 14. Acts xiii. 18.

him down, and tore him, and left him apparently dead. He adds farther, that the case had existed during the whole life of his son, from a child. This was a case of uncommon obstinacy. The affliction was fixed and lasting. The disciples, seeing the obstinacy of the case; seeing him dumb, wasted away, torn, and foaming; despaired of being able to cure him. They lacked the faith which was necessary; doubted whether they could cure him, and therefore could not.

Jesus said to the father, Mark ix. 23, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." That is, this cure shall be effected if you have faith. Not that his faith would give Jesus the power to heal him, but it would render it proper that he should exert that power in his favour. In this way, and in this only, are all things possible to believers.

The man had faith. Mark ix. 24. The father came, as a father should do, weeping, and praying that his faith might be increased, so as to make it proper that Jesus should interpose in his behalf, and save his child.

"Help thou mine unbelief," Mark ix. 24. This was an expression of humility. If my faith is defective, supply what is lacking. Help me to overcome my unbelief. Let not the defect of my faith be in the way of this blessing.

18. And Jesus rebuked the devil. The word *rebuke* has the combined force of reproving and commanding. He reproved him for having afflicted the child, and he commanded him to come out of him. Mark, ch. ix. 25, has recorded the words which he used—words implying reproof and command: "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him." And the spirit cried, and with a mighty con-

Because of your unbelief: <sup>2</sup> for verily I say unto you, If <sup>3</sup> ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. iii. 19. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xxi. 21. Mark xi. 23. Luke xvii. 6. 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

vulsion came out, leaving him apparently dead. Jesus lifted him up by the hand, (Mark); and gave him to his father (Luke).

19. Then came the disciples, &c. This inquiry was made in some house to which they retired near the place where the miracle was performed. (Mark.) Jesus told them in reply, that it was because of their unbelief that they had not been able to cast him out. They were appalled by the difficulty of the case, and the obstinacy of the disease. Their faith would not have made it more easy for God to work this miracle, but such was his will; such the way in which he worked miracles, that he required faith in those who were the instruments.

20. As a grain of mustard seed. See Note, Matt. xiii. 31, 32. The mustard seed was the smallest of all seeds. It has been supposed by some, therefore, that Jesus meant, if ye have the smallest or feeblest faith that is genuine, ye can do all things. The mustard seed produced the largest of all herbs. He has been supposed by others, therefore, to mean, if you have increasing, expanding, enlarged faith, growing and strengthening from small beginnings, you can perform the most difficult undertaking. There is a principle of vitality in the grain of seed stretching forward to great results, which illustrates the nature of faith. Your faith should be like that. This is probably the true meaning. ¶ Ye shall say unto this mountain, &c. Probably he pointed to a mountain near, to assure them if they had such faith, they might accomplish the most difficult undertakings—things that at first would appear impossible.

21. Howbeit, this kind, &c. This kind means this kind of devils; this species of possession. Where they have had long

22 ¶ And <sup>1</sup> while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men :

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 21; xx. 17. Mark viii. 31; ix. 30, 31; x. 33. Luke ix. 22, 44; xviii. 31; xxiv. 6, 26, 46.

possession, where they produce such painful, and fixed, and alarming effects, they can be expelled only in connexion with prayer and fasting. ¶ *Goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting.* That is, in order to work miracles of this kind, to cast out devils in cases so obstinate and dreadful as this, faith of the highest kind is necessary. That faith is produced and kept vigorous only by much prayer, and by such abstinence from food as fits the mind for the highest exercises of religion, and leaves it free to hold communion with God.

22, 23. See also Mark ix. 30—33. Luke ix. 43—45. *And while they abode in Galilee.* Galilee, the northern part of Palestine. See Note, Matt. ii. 22. ¶ *The Son of man shall be betrayed, &c.* To *betray*, means to deliver up in a treacherous manner. This was done by Judas Iscariot, called for that the traitor. Matt. xxvi. 14—16, 47—50. A traitor, or betrayer, is one who makes use of confidence reposed in him for the purpose of delivering him up who puts confidence in him, to the hands of enemies.

23. *And they shall kill him, and he shall be raised again.* See Matt. xii. 40. Mark and Luke add, that they understood not that saying, and it was hid from them, and they were afraid to ask him. The reasons of this may have been, 1. They were strongly attached to him, and were exceedingly sorry (Matthew) at any intimation that he was soon to leave them. They learned with great slowness and reluctance, therefore, that he was to be treated in this manner. 2. They were not willing to believe it. They knew he was the Messiah. But they supposed that he was to be a distinguished prince, and was to restore the kingdom to Israel. Acts i. 6. *But to be betrayed into the*

24 ¶ And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received <sup>2</sup> tribute-money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest

<sup>2</sup> *Didrachma*, about two drachms in weight, or about 15d. in value. Exod. xxx. 13; xxxviii. 26.

hands of his enemies, and be put to death, appeared to them to be frustrating all these expectations. 3. Though what he said was plain enough, yet they did not understand it, they could not see how he could be the Messiah, and yet be put to death in this manner. Nor did they understand it fully till after the resurrection.

24—27. *And when they were come to Capernaum.* See Note, Matt. iv. 13. ¶ *They that received tribute.* In the original this is, they who received the didrachma or the double drachma. The drachm was a Grecian coin, worth about sevenpence-halfpenny of our money. This tribute consisting of those two drachms, was not paid to the Roman government, but to the Jewish collectors for the use of the temple service. It was directed in the law of Moses that in numbering the people, half a shekel should be received of each man for the services of religion. See Exod. xxx. 11—16. This was in addition to the tithes paid by the whole nation, and seems to have been considered as a voluntary offering. It was devoted to the purchase of animals for the daily sacrifice, wood, flour, salt, incense, &c., for the use of the temple. Two drachms were about equal to half a shekel. ¶ *Doth not your master pay tribute?* This tribute was voluntary, and they therefore asked him whether he was in the habit of paying taxes for the support of the temple. Peter replied, that it was his custom to pay all the usual taxes of the nation.

25. *Jesus prevented him.* That is, Jesus commenced speaking before Peter, or spoke before Peter had told him what he had said. This implies that though not present with Peter when he gave the answer, yet Jesus was acquainted with what he had said. ¶ *Prevent.* To go

thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we

before, or precede. It did not mean, as it now does with us, to hinder or obstruct. See the same use of the word in Psa. lix. 10; lxxix. 8; lxxxviii. 13; cxix. 148. 1 Thes. iv. 15. ¶ *Of whom do the kings of the earth, &c.* That is, earthly kings. ¶ *Their own children.* Their sons; the members of the family. ¶ *Or of strangers?* The word *strangers* does not mean foreigners, but those who were not their own sons, or members of their family. Peter replied that tribute was collected of those out of their own family. Jesus answered, then are the children, or sons of the kings, free; i. e. taxes are not required of them. The meaning of this may be thus expressed: Kings do not tax their own sons. This tribute money is taken up for the temple service; i. e. the service of my Father. I, therefore, being the Son of God, for whom this is taken up, cannot be lawfully required to pay this tribute.

27. *Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them.* That is, lest they should think that we despise the temple and its service, and thus provoke needless opposition, though we are not under obligation to pay it, yet it is best to pay it to them. ¶ *Go to the sea.* This was at Capernaum, on the shore of the sea of Tiberias. ¶ *Thou shalt find a piece of money.* In the original, thou shalt find a *stater*, a Roman silver coin of the value of four drachms, or one shekel, and of course sufficient to pay the tribute for two, himself and Peter. In whatever way this is regarded, it is a proof that Jesus was possessed of divine attributes. If he knew that the first fish that came up would have such a coin in his mouth, it was proof of omniscience. If he created the coin for the occasion, and placed it there, then it was proof of divine power. The former is the most probable supposition. It is by no means absurd that a fish should have swallowed a silver coin. Many of them bite eagerly at any thing bright, and would not hesitate, therefore, at swallowing a piece of money.

## REMARKS.

I. Secret prayer should be practised alone, or apart from others. Ver. 1.

Christ often went into deserts, and on mountains, that he might be by himself. This should be done: 1. To avoid the appearance of ostentation. 2. Pride is easily excited, when we know that others hear us pray. Every one should have some place, some closet—to which he may retire daily, with the assurance that none sees him but God. See Notes on ch. vi. 6.

II. In such seasons we shall meet God. Ver. 2. It was in such a season that the divine favour was peculiarly shown to Christ. Then the transfiguration took place, the brightest manifestation of his glory that ever occurred on earth. So the clearest and most precious manifestations of the love and glory of God will be made to us in prayer.

III. We see the great glory of Christ. Ver. 2. No such favour had been granted to any prophet before him. We see the regard in which he was held by Moses and Elias, among the greatest of the prophets. We see the honour which God put on him, exalting him far above them both. Ver. 6. The glory of heaven encompasses the Lord Jesus, and all the redeemed pay him reverence. In him the divine nature shines illustriously; and of him and to him the divinity speaks in glory, as the only begotten Son of God.

IV. It is right to have particular affection for some Christians more than others, at the same time that we should love them all. Christ loved all his disciples; but he admitted some to peculiar friendship and favours. Ver. 1. Some Christians may be more congenial with us in feeling, age, and education than others; and it is proper, and may be greatly to our advantage, to admit them among our peculiar friends.

V. The death of Jesus is an object of great interest to the redeemed. Moses and Elias talked of it. Luke ix. 30, 31. Angels also desire to look into this great subject. 1 Pet. i. 12. By that death, all the redeemed are saved; and in that death the angels see the most signal display of the justice and love of God.

would offend <sup>1</sup> them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up ; and when thou hast opened his

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiv. 21 ; xv. 1—3. 2 Cor. vi. 3.

**VI.** Christians should delight to be where God has manifested his glory. The feeling of Peter was natural. Ver.

His love of the glorious presence of Christ and the redeemed was right. He did only in the manner of manifesting His love. We should always love the use of prayer—the sanctuary—and the place where Christ has manifested himself peculiarly glorious and precious to our souls, or as peculiarly our Friend and Deliverer.

**VII.** We need not be afraid of the awful displays of deity, if Christ be with us. Ver. 7. Were we alone, we should fear. None could see God and live ; for he is a consuming fire. Heb. xii. 1. But with Jesus for our friend we may go confidently down to death ; we may meet him at his awful bar ; we may tell in the full splendours of his presence all eternity.

**VIII.** Saints at death are taken to paradise, and live now in glory. Ver.

Moses and Elias were not created new, but came as they were. They came from heaven and returned thither. The spirits of all men live, therefore, happiness or woe after the body is dead.

**IX.** It is not unreasonable to suppose that saints may have some knowledge of what is done here on earth. Moses and Elias appear to have been acquainted with the fact that Jesus was about to die at Jerusalem.

**X.** The scriptures will be fulfilled. The fulfilment may take place when we least know it ; or in events that we should not suppose were intended for a fulfilment. Ver. 12.

**XI.** Erroneous teachers will endeavour to draw us away from the truth. Mark

14. They will do it by art, and flattery, and the appearance of calm inquiry. We should always be on our guard against any teachers appearing to us in question what Christ has plainly taught us.

**XII.** Mark ix. 15. Christ, in his word and by his Spirit, is a safe teacher.

mouth, thou shalt find <sup>2</sup> a piece of money : that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

<sup>2</sup> A stater, which was half an ounce of silver, or about half a crown value.

When men are suggesting plausible doubts about doctrine, or attempting to unsettle our minds by cavils and inquiry, we should leave them, and apply by prayer, and by searching the Bible, to Christ, the great Prophet, who is the way, the truth, and the life.

**XIII.** Parents should be earnest for the welfare of their children. Ver. 15. It is right for them to pray to God in times of sickness, that he would heal them. Miracles are not to be expected ; but God only can bless the means which parents use for their sick and afflicted children.

**XIV.** Parents may do much by faith and prayer for their children. Here the faith of the parent was the means of saving the life of the child. Ver. 14—18. So the faith of parents—a faith producing diligent instruction ; a holy example, and much prayer, may be the means of saving their souls. God will not indeed save them on account of the faith of the parent ; but the holy life of a father and mother may be the means of training up their children for heaven.

**XV.** It is proper to pray to Jesus to increase our faith. Mark ix. 24. We may be sensible of our unbelief ; may feel that we deserve condemnation, and that we deserve no favour that is usually bestowed on faith ; but we may come to him, and implore of him an increase of faith, and thus obtain the object of our desires.

**XVI.** Our unbelief hinders our doing much that we might do. Ver. 20. We shrink from great difficulties, we fail in great duties, because we do not put confidence in God, who is able to help us. The proper way to live a life of religion and peace, is to do just what God requires of us, depending on his grace to aid us.

**XVII.** We see the proper way of increasing our faith. Ver. 21. It is by much prayer and self-denial, and fasting. Faith is a plant that never grows in an uncultivated soil, and is never luxuriant, unless it is often exposed to the beams of the Sun of righteousness.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Humility and harmlessness taught, 1—14.*

*How to treat offences, 15—20. Forgiveness enforced by the parable of the forgiving king and inexorable servant, 23—35.*

AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying,

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix. 33—41. Luke ix. 46—50, xxii. 24—27.

XVIII. It is right to weep and mourn over the death of Jesus. Ver. 23. It was a cruel death. And we should mourn that our best Friend passed through such sufferings. Yet we should rather mourn that our sins were the cause of such bitter sorrows; and that but for our sins, and the sins of the rest of mankind, he might have been always happy.

"'Twas you my sins, my cruel sins,  
His chief tormentors were,  
Each of my crimes became a nail,  
And unbelief the spear.

"'Twas you that pulled the vengeance down  
Upon his guiltless head.  
Break, break, my heart! O burst mine eyes,  
And let my sorrows bleed."

XIX. At the same time, we should rejoice that God made his death the source of the richest blessings that ever descended on mankind. He rose and brought life and immortality to light. Ver. 23.

XX. We should comply with all the requirements of the laws of the land, if not contrary to the law of God. It is important that governments should be supported. Ver. 25. See also Rom. xiii. 1—7.

XXI. We should also be willing to contribute our just proportion to the support of the institutions of religion. The tribute which Jesus paid here by a miracle was for the support of religion in the temple. Ver. 24—27. Jesus understood of how much value are the institutions of religion to the welfare of man. He worked a miracle, therefore, to make a voluntary offering to support religion. Religion promotes the purity, peace, intelligence, and order of the community, and every man is therefore under obligation to do his part towards its support. If any man doubts this, he has only to go to the places where there is no religion—among scoundrels, and thieves, and adulterers,

Who is the greatest \* in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them.

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted,<sup>3</sup> and be

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xx. 20—28. Rom. xii. 10. Phil. ii. 1  
<sup>3</sup> Psa. li. 10—13. John iii. 3.

and prostitutes, and pickpockets, and drunkards. No money is ever lost that goes in any way to suppress those vices.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

1—6. See also Mark ix. 33—41. Luke ix. 46—50. *Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?* By the kingdom of heaven they meant the kingdom which they supposed Jesus was about to set up, his kingdom as the Messiah. They asked the question because they supposed, in accordance with the common expectation of the Jews, that he was about to set up a temporal kingdom of great splendour; and they wished to know who should have the principal offices and posts of honour and profit. This was a frequent subject of inquiry and controversy among the disciples. Mark, ch. ix. 34, informs us that they had had a dispute on this subject in the way. Jesus, he says, inquired of them what they had been disputing about. Luke, ch. ix. 47, says that Jesus perceived the thought of their heart:—an act implying omniscience, for none can search the heart but God. Jer. xvii. 10. The disciples, conscious that the subject of their dispute was known, requested Jesus to decide it. Matt. xviii. 1. They were at first silent through shame (Mark), but perceiving that the subject of their dispute was known, they came, as Matthew states, and referred the matter to him for his opinion.

2, 3. *Except ye be converted.* The word *converted* means changed, or turned. It means to change or turn from one habit of life, or set of opinions, to another. Luke xxii. 32. Jas. v. 19. See also Matt. vii. 6; xvi. 23. Luke vii. 9, &c., where the same word is used in the original. It is sometimes referred to that great change called the new birth, or regeneration, Psa. li. 13, Isa. lx. 5, Acts iii. 19, but not always. It is a general

come as little children,<sup>1</sup> ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself<sup>2</sup> as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 20. <sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 2. <sup>3</sup> Luke xiv. ii. Jas. iv. 10.

word, meaning any change. The word regeneration denotes a particular change—the passing from death to life. The phrase, *except ye be converted*, does not imply of necessity that they were not Christians before, or had not been born again. It means that their opinions and feelings about the kingdom of Messiah must be changed. They had supposed that he was to be a temporal prince. They expected he would reign as other kings did. They supposed he would have his great officers of state, as other monarchs had. And they were ambitiously inquiring who should hold the highest offices. Jesus told them they were wrong in these views and expectations. No such things would take place. From these notions they must be turned, changed, or converted, or they could have no part in his kingdom. Such ideas did not fit at all the nature of his kingdom. ¶ *And become as little children.* Children are to a great extent destitute of ambition, pride, and haughtiness. They are characteristically humble and teachable. By requiring his disciples to be like them, he did not intend to express any opinion about the native moral character of children, but simply that in these respects they should become like them. They should lay aside their ambitious views, and pride, and be willing to occupy their proper station—a very lowly one. Mark says, ch. ix. 35, that Jesus, before he placed the little child in the midst of them, told them that “if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.” That is, he shall be the most distinguished Christian who is the most humble, and who is willing to be esteemed least, and last of all. To esteem ourselves as God esteems us, is humility. And it cannot be degrading to think of ourselves as we are. But pride, or an attempt to be thought of more importance than we are, is foolish, wicked, and degrading.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little<sup>3</sup> child in my name receiveth me.

6 But whoso shall offend<sup>4</sup> one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that

<sup>3</sup> Ch. x. 42. <sup>4</sup> Mark ix. 42. Luke xvii. 1, 2.

4. *The greatest, &c.* That is, shall be the most eminent Christian: shall have most of the true spirit of religion.

5. *And whoso shall receive one such little child.* That is, whoso shall receive and love one with a spirit like this child; one who is humble, meek, unambitious, or a real Christian. ¶ *In my name.* As a follower of me; or because he is attached to me. Whoso receives one possessed of my spirit, and who, because he has that spirit, loves him, loves me also. The word *receive* means to approve, love, or treat with kindness; to aid in the time of need. See Matt. xxv. 35—40.

Mark, ch. ix. 38, and Luke, ch. ix. 49, add a conversation that took place on this occasion, that has been omitted by Matthew. John told him that they had seen one casting out devils in his name, and they forbade him, because he followed not with them. Jesus replied that he should not have been forbidden, for there was no one who could work a miracle in his name that could lightly speak evil of him. That is, though he did not attend them, though he had not joined himself to their society, yet he could not really be opposed to him. Indeed, they should have remembered, that the power to work a miracle must always come from the same source, that is, God; and that he that had the ability given him to work a miracle, and that did it in the name of Christ, must be a real friend to him. It is probable from this, that the power of working miracles in the name of Christ was given to many who did not attend on his ministry.

6. *Whoso shall offend.* That is, cause to fall, or to sin; or who should place anything in their way to hinder their piety or happiness. Note, Matt. v. 29. ¶ *These little ones.* That is, Christians, manifesting the spirit of little children. 1 John ii. 1, 12, 18, 28. ¶ *It were better for him that a millstone, &c.* Mills anciently were either turned by hand, Note, Matt.

*All sin to be put away.*

MATTHEW.

A.D. 32.

a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 ¶ Woe unto the world because of offences! for <sup>1</sup> it must needs be that offences come; but <sup>2</sup> woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore <sup>3</sup> if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 19. Jude 4. <sup>2</sup> Jude 11. <sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 29, 30. Mark ix. 43, 45.

xxiv. 41, or by beasts, chiefly by mules. These were of the larger kind; and the original words denote that it was this kind that was intended. This was one mode of capital punishment practised by the Greeks, Syrians, Romans, and by some other surrounding nations. The meaning is, it would be better for him to die, before he had committed the sin. To injure the feeblest Christian, or to cause him to sin, will be regarded as a most serious offence, and will be punished accordingly.

7. *Woe unto the world because of offences.* That is, offences will be the cause of woe, or of suffering. *Offences*, here, mean things that will produce sin: that will cause us to sin, or temptations to induce others to sin. Note, Matt. v. 29. ¶ *It must needs be, &c.* That is, such is the depravity of man, that there will be always some attempting to make others sin; some men of wickedness endeavouring to lead Christians astray, and rejoicing when they have succeeded in causing them to fall. Such, also, is the strength of our native corruption, and the force of passion, that our besetting sins will lead us astray. ¶ *Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.* He who draws others into sin is awfully guilty. No man can be more guilty. No wickedness can be more deeply seated in the heart, than that which attempts to mar the peace, defile the purity, and destroy the souls of others. And yet, in all ages, there have been multitudes, who, by persecution, threats, arts, allurements, and persuasion, have endeavoured to seduce Christians from the faith, and to lead them into sin.

for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter <sup>4</sup> into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes <sup>5</sup> to be cast into hell fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I

<sup>4</sup> Heb. iv. 11. <sup>5</sup> Luke ix. 23.

8, 9. *If thy hand, &c.* See Notes, Matt. v. 29, 30. The meaning of all these instances is the same. Temptations to sin, attachments, and employments of any kind that cannot be pursued without leading us into sin, be they ever so dear to us, must be abandoned, or the soul must be lost. ¶ *It is better—to enter into life halt or maimed—or having one eye, &c.* It is not meant by this, that when the body shall be raised, it will be maimed and disfigured in this manner. It will be perfect. See 1 Cor. xv. 42—44. But these things are said for the purpose of carrying out or making complete the figure, or the representation of cutting off the hands, &c. The meaning is, it is better to go to heaven, without enjoying the things that caused us to sin, than to enjoy them here, and then be lost. ¶ *Halt. Lame. Maimed.* With a loss of limbs. ¶ *Into hell fire.* It is implied in all this, that if their beloved sins are not abandoned, the soul must go into everlasting fire. This is conclusive proof that the sufferings of the wicked will be eternal. See Notes on Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.

10. *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, &c.* That is, one who has become like little children, or, a Christian. Jesus then proceeds to state the reason why we should not despise his feeblest and obscurest follower. That reason is drawn from the care which God exercises over them. The first instance of that care is, *that in heaven their angels do always behold his face.* He does not mean, I suppose, to state that every good man has his guardian angel, as many of the Jews believed; but that the angels

say unto you, That in heaven their angels <sup>1</sup> do always behold <sup>2</sup> the face of my Father which is in heaven.

11 For the Son of man is come to save <sup>3</sup> that which was lost.

12 How think ye? if <sup>4</sup> a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains,

<sup>1</sup> Acts xii. 15. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xvii. 15. <sup>3</sup> Ch. I. 21. Luke ix. 56; xix. 10. John iii. 17; x. 10; xii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 15. <sup>4</sup> Luke xv. 4—7.

were, in general, the guards of his followers, and aided them, and watched over them, Heb. i. 14. ¶ *Do always behold the face of God.* This is taken from the practice of earthly courts. To be admitted to the presence of a king, to be permitted to see his face continually, to have free access at all times, was deemed a mark of peculiar favour, 1 Kin. x. 8 Est. i. 14, and was esteemed a security for his protection. So, says our Saviour, we should not despise the obscurest Christians, for they are ministered to by the highest and noblest of beings, beings who are always enjoying the favour and friendship of God.

11. *For the Son of man, &c.* This is a second reason why we should not despise Christians, for the Son of man came to seek and save them. He came in search of them when lost; he found them; he saved them. It was the great object of his life; and though obscure and little in the eye of the world, yet that cannot be worthy of contempt which the Son of God sought by his toils and his death. ¶ *Son of man.* See Note, Matt. viii. 19, 20. ¶ *That which was lost.* Property is lost when it is consumed, mislaid, &c.—when we have no longer the use of it. Friends are lost when they die—we enjoy their society no longer. A wicked and profligate man is said to be lost to virtue and happiness. He is useless to society. So all men are lost. They are wicked, miserable wanderers from God. They are lost to piety, to happiness, and heaven. Thus Jesus came to save by giving his own life a ransom, and shedding his own blood that they might be recovered and saved.

12—14. *To show still further the rea-*

and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one <sup>5</sup> of these little ones should perish.

15 ¶ Moreover if <sup>6</sup> thy brother

<sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 9. <sup>6</sup> Lev. xix. 17. Luke xvii. 3.

son why we should not despise them, he introduced a parable showing the joy felt when a thing lost is found. A man rejoices over the recovery of one of his flock that had wandered, more than over all that remained. So God rejoices that man is restored, seeks his salvation, and wills that not one thus found should perish. If God thus loves and preserves the redeemed, then surely man should not despise them. See this passage farther explained in Luke xv. 4—10.

15—20. *Moreover, if thy brother.* The word *brother*, here, evidently means a fellow professor of religion. Christians are called brethren because they belong to the same redeemed family, having a common Father, God, and because they are united in the same feelings, objects, and destiny. ¶ *Trespass against thee.* That is, injure thee in any way, by words or conduct. The original word means *sin* against thee. This may be done by injuring the character, person, or property. ¶ *Go and tell him his fault.* This was required under the law, Lev. xix. 17. In the original it is *go and reprove him.* Seek an explanation of his conduct; and if he has done wrong, administer a friendly and brotherly reproof. This is required to be done alone:—1. That he may have an opportunity of explaining it. In nine cases out of ten, where one supposes he has been injured, a little friendly conversation would set the matter right, and prevent difficulty. 2. That he may have opportunity of acknowledging his offence, or making reparation if he has done wrong. Many would be glad of such an opportunity, and it is our duty to furnish it by calling on them. 3. That we may admonish them of their error, if they

shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if <sup>1</sup> he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three <sup>2</sup> witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church:

<sup>1</sup> Jas. v. 20. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xix. 15. 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

have done an injury to the cause of religion. This should not be blazoned abroad. It can do no good. It does injury. It is what the enemies of religion wish. Christ is often wounded in the house of his friends; and religion, as well as an injured brother, often suffers by spreading such faults before the world. ¶ *Thou hast gained thy brother.* To gain means, sometimes, to preserve, or to save, 1 Cor. ix. 19. Here it means, thou hast preserved him, or restored him to be a consistent Christian. Perhaps it may include the idea also, thou hast reconciled him, thou hast gained him as a christian brother.

16. *If he will not hear thee, &c.* That is, if he spurns or abuses you, or will not be entreated by you, and will not reform. ¶ *Take one or two more.* The design of taking them seems to be, 1. That he might be induced to listen to them. Ver. 17. They should be persons of influence or authority; his personal friends, or those in whom he could put confidence. 2. That they might be witnesses of his conduct before the church. Ver. 17. The law of Moses required two or three witnesses, Deut. xix. 15. John viii. 17. 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

17. *Tell it to the church.* See Note, Matt. xvi. 18. The church may here mean the whole assembly of believers; or it may mean those who are authorized to try such cases, the representatives of the church, or those who act for them. In the Jewish synagogue there was a bench of elders, before whom trials of this kind were brought. It was to be brought to the church, in order that the offender might be admonished, entreated, and, if possible, reformed. This was, and is always to be

but if he neglect to hear the church, let <sup>3</sup> him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, <sup>4</sup> Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 3—5. 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xvi. 19. John xx. 23. Acts xv. 23—31. 2 Cor. ii. 10.

the first business in the employed discipline. ¶ *If he neglect to hear the church let him be, &c.* The Jews gave the name Heathen or Gentile to all other nations but themselves. With them they had no religious intercourse or communion. ¶ *Publican.* See Note, Matt. v. 47. Publicans were men of abandoned character, and the Jews would have no intercourse with them. The meaning of this is, cease to have religious intercourse with him, to acknowledge him as a brother. Regard him as obstinate, self-willed, and guilty. It does not mean that we should cease to show kindness to him, and aid him in affliction or trial; for this is required towards all men. But it means that we should disown him as a christian brother, and treat him as we do other men not connected with the church. This should not be done till all these steps are taken. This is the only way of kindness. This is the only way to preserve peace and purity in the church.

18. *Whatsoever ye shall bind, &c.* See Note, Matt. xvi. 19. These words were spoken to the apostles. Christ had used the same words to Peter. He used them here to signify that the disciples all had the same power; that in ordering the affairs of the church he did not intend to give Peter any supremacy, or any exclusive power to regulate it. The meaning of this verse is, whatever you shall do in the discipline of the church shall be approved by God, or bound in heaven. This promise, therefore, cannot be understood as extending to all Christians or ministers; for all others but the apostles may err.

19. *Again I say unto you, if two of you, &c.* This is connected with the pre-

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## Capernaum.

g any thing that they shall shall be done for them of her which is in heaven.

or where two or three are l together \* in my name, n I in the midst of them.

Then came Peter to him,

d. 24. John xvi. 24. 1 John v. 14.  
18. 1 Cor. v. 4.

es. The connexion is this: The man is to be excluded from the Ver. 17. The care of the the power of admitting or ex- members—of organizing and es- it—is committed to you, the

Ver. 18. Yet there is not need ole to give validity to the trans- When two of you agree—or have mind, feelings, and opinion, arrangement of affairs in the r about things desired for its and shall ask of God it shall be them. See Acts i. 14—26; xv. The promise here has respect to les in organizing the church. It ith any propriety, be applied to ary prayers of believers. Other are made to them, and it is true prayer of faith will be answered; is not the truth taught here.

r where two or three, &c. This eral assertion, made to support ular promise to the apostles.

He affirms that wherever two are assembled together, in his is in the midst of them. ¶ In : That is, 1. By my authority, r me in my church. See John vi. 23. 2. It may mean for my d in the place of prayer and praise d in obedience to my command, a desire to promote my glory. am I in the midst of them.

could more clearly prove that ust be everywhere present, and of be God. Every day, perhaps ur, two or three, or many more, assembled in cities, or villages nd, in America, in Greenland, in n Ceylon, in the Sandwich Islands, ia, and in Judea—in almost every the world—and in the midst of l is Jesus, the Saviour. Millions the same time, in every quarter of be, worship in his name, and ex-

and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive \* him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

23 ¶ Therefore is the kingdom

\* Mark xi. 25. Luke xvii. 4. Col. iii. 13.

perience the truth of the promise that he is present with them. It is impossible that he should be in all these places, and not be God.

21. Then came Peter, &c. The mention of the duty, ver. 15, of seeing a brother when he had offended us, implying that it was a duty to forgive him, led Peter to ask how often this was to be done. ¶ *Forgive him?* To *forgive* is to treat as though the offence was not committed—to declare that we will not harbour malice, or treat unkindly, but that the matter shall be buried and forgotten. ¶ *Till seven times?* The Jews taught that a man was to forgive another three times, but not the fourth. Peter more than doubled this, and asked whether forgiveness was to be exercised to so great an extent. ¶ *Till seventy times seven.* The meaning is that we are not to limit our forgiveness to any fixed number of times. See Gen. iv. 24. As often as a brother injures us, and asks forgiveness, we are to forgive him. It is his duty to ask forgiveness. Luke xvii. 4. If he does this, it is our duty to declare that we forgive him, and to treat him accordingly. If he does not ask us to forgive him, yet we are not at liberty to follow him with revenge and malice, but are still to treat him kindly, and to do him good. Luke x. 30—37.

23. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened, &c. This phrase has reference to the church, or to the way in which God will deal with his people. It shall be in my church as it was with a certain king; or God will deal with the members of his church as a certain king did with his servants. See Note, Matt. iii. 2. This parable, see Matt. xiii. 3, is related to show the duty of forgiving others. It is not necessary to suppose that it was a true narrative, but only that it illustrated the truth which he was teaching. At the

of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take<sup>1</sup> account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand<sup>2</sup> talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be<sup>3</sup> sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped<sup>4</sup> him, say-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiv. 12. <sup>2</sup> A talent is 750 ounces of silver, which, at 5s. the ounce, is £147 10s. <sup>3</sup> 2 Kin. iv. 1. Isa. i. 1. <sup>4</sup> Or, besought him.

same time it may be true that such an occurrence really took place. ¶ *Would take account of his servants.* To take account means to reckon, to settle up the affairs. *Servants* here means, probably, petty princes, or, more likely, collectors of the revenue, or taxes. Among the ancients, kings often farmed out, or sold for a certain sum, the taxes of a particular province. Thus, when Judea was subject to Egypt, or Rome, the kings frequently sold to the high priest the taxes to be raised from Judea, on condition of a much smaller sum being paid to them. This secured to them a certain sum, but it gave occasion to much oppression in the collection of the taxes. It is probable that some such persons are intended by the word servants.

24. *Ten thousand talents.* A talent was a sum of money, or weight of silver or gold, amounting to three thousand shekels. A silver shekel was worth, after the captivity, a little more than two shillings and threepence. A talent of silver was worth upwards of three hundred and forty-two pounds; of gold, five thousand, four hundred and seventy-five pounds. If these were silver talents, as is probable, then the sum owed by the servant was more than three millions sterling; a sum which proves that he was not a domestic, but some tributary prince. The sum is used to show that the debt was immensely large, and that our sins are so great that they cannot be estimated or numbered. Compare Job xxii. 5.

ing, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion,<sup>5</sup> and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred<sup>6</sup> pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him,

<sup>5</sup> Psal. lxxviii. 38. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xx. 2. The Roman penny is the eighth part of an ounce, which, after the ounce, is sevenpence-halfpenny.

25. *His lord commanded him to be sold, &c.* By the laws of the Hebrews, they were permitted to sell debtors, with their wives and children, into servitude for a time sufficient to pay the debt. See Lev. xxv. 39—46. 2 Kings iv. 1. Amos viii. 6.

26. *The servant fell down and worshipped him.* This does not mean that he paid him religious homage, but that in an humble, and reverent, and earnest manner, he entreated him to have patience with him. He prostrated himself before his lord, as is customary in all eastern nations, when subjects are in the presence of their king. See Note, Matt. ii. 2.

27. *The lord of that servant was moved with compassion, &c.* He had pity on him. He saw his distressed condition. He pitied his family. He forgave him the whole debt. This represents the mercy of God to men. They had sinned. They owed to God more than could be paid. They were about to be cast off. But God has mercy on them, and in connexion with their prayers forgives them. We are not to interpret the circumstances of a parable too strictly. The verse about selling the wife and children is not to be taken literally, as if God was about to punish them for the sins of the father; but it is a circumstance thrown in to keep up the story; to make it consistent; to explain why the servant was so anxious to obtain a delay of the time of payment.

28, 29. *He found a fellow-servant who owed him an hundred pence.* The penny

saying, <sup>1</sup> Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then this lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 26.

was a Roman coin, worth about seven pence halfpenny of our money. Consequently, this debt was about three guineas—a very small sum compared with what had been forgiven to the first servant. Perhaps our Saviour, by this, meant to teach that the offences which our fellow men commit against us are very small and insignificant, compared with our offences against God. Since God has forgiven us so much, we ought to forgive each other the small offences which are committed. ¶ *Took him by the throat.* Took him in a violent and rough manner, half choked or throttled him. This was the more criminal and base, as he had himself been so kindly treated, and dealt so mildly with, by his lord. ¶ *Besought.* Entreated, pleaded with him.

31. *So when his fellow-servants, &c.* This is a mere circumstance thrown into the story for the sake of keeping, or making a consistent narrative. It cannot be intended to teach that other Christians should go and tell God what a brother had done; for God well knows all the actions of his children, and does not need us, surely, to inform him of what is done. It is abusing the Bible, and departing from the design of parables, to press every circumstance, and to endeavour to extract from it some spiritual meaning. Our Saviour, in this parable, designed most clearly to exhibit only one great truth—the duty of forgiving our brethren, and the great evil of not forgiving a brother when he offends us. The circumstances of the parable are intended only to make the story consistent with itself, and thus to impress the general truth more fully on the mind.

thou wicked servant, <sup>2</sup> I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So <sup>3</sup> likewise shall my hea

<sup>2</sup> Luke xix. 22. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vi. 12. Prov. xxi. 13. Jas. ii. 13.

34. *Delivered him to the tormentors.* The word *tormentors*, here, probably means keepers of the prison. Torments were inflicted on criminals, not on debtors. These torments were stretching the limbs, or pinching the flesh, or taking out the eyes, or taking off the skin while alive, &c. It is not probable that any thing of this kind is intended, but only that the servant was punished by imprisonment till the debt should be paid.

35. *So likewise, &c.* This verse contains the sum or moral of the parable. When Christ has explained one of his own parables, we are to receive it just as he has explained it, and not attempt to draw spiritual instruction from any parts or circumstances which he has not explained. The following seem to be the particulars of the general truth which he meant to teach: 1. That our sins are great. 2. That God freely forgives them. 3. That the offences committed against us by our brethren are comparatively small. 4. That we should, therefore, most freely forgive them. 5. That if we do not, God will be justly angry with us, and punish us. ¶ *From your hearts.* That is, not merely in words, but really and truly to feel and act towards him as if he had not offended us. ¶ *Treaspases.* Offences, injur es. Remarks and actions designed to do us wrong.

#### REMARKS.

I. We see that it is possible to make a profession of religion an occasion of ambition. Ver. 1. The apostles at first sought honour, and expected office in consequence of following Christ. So thousands have done since. Religion,



venly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not

every one his brother their trespasses.

notwithstanding all the opposition it has met with, really commands the confidence of mankind. To make a profession of it may be a way of access to that confidence. And thousands, it is to be feared, even yet enter the church merely to obtain some worldly benefit. Especially does this danger beset ministers of the gospel. There are few paths to the confidence of mankind so easily trod, as to enter the ministry. Every minister, of course, if at all worthy of his office, has access to the confidence of multitudes, and is never despised but by the worst and lowest of mankind. No way is so easy to step at once to public confidence. Other men toil long to establish influence by personal character. The minister has it by virtue of his office. Those who now enter the ministry are tempted far more in this respect than were the apostles; and how should they search their own hearts, to see that no such abominable motive has induced them to seek that office!

II. It is consummate wickedness thus to prostrate the most sacred of all offices to the worst of purposes. The apostles, at this time, were ignorant. They expected such a kingdom as it might have been right to seek distinction in. But we labour under no such ignorance. We know that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and woe to the man that acts as though it were. Deep and awful must be the lot of him who thus seeks the honours of the world, while he is professedly following the meek and lowly Jesus.

III. Humility is indispensable to religion. Ver. 3. No man, who is not humble, can possibly be a Christian. He must be willing to esteem himself as he is, and to have others esteem him so also. This is humility. And humility is lovely. It is not meanness. It is not cowardice. It is not want of just self-esteem. It is a view of ourselves just as we are, and a willingness that God and all creatures should so esteem us. What can be more lovely than such an estimation of ourselves? And how foolish and wicked is it to be proud; that is, to think more of ourselves, and wish others to think of us more than we deserve! To put on ap-

pearances, and to magnify our own importance, and think that the affairs of the universe could not go on without us, and to be indignant when all the world does not bow down to do us homage—this is hypocrisy, as well as wickedness; and there may be, therefore, hypocrites out of the church, as well as in it.

IV. Humility is the best evidence of piety. Ver. 4. The most humble man is the most eminent Christian. He is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. The effect of sin is to produce pride. Religion overcomes it by producing a just sense of ourselves, of other men, of angels, and of God. We may therefore measure the advance of piety in our own souls by our increase in humility.

V. We see the danger of despising and doing injury to real Christians, and more especially the guilt of attempting to draw them into sin. Ver. 6. God watches over them. He loves them. In the eye of the world they may be of little importance, but not so with God. The most obscure follower of Christ is dear, infinitely dear, to him, and he will take care of him. He that attempts to injure a Christian attempts to injure God; for God has redeemed him, and loves him.

VI. Men will do much to draw others into sin. Ver. 7. In all communities there are some who seem to live for this. They have often much wealth, or learning, or accomplishment, or address, or professional influence; and they employ it for the sake of seducing the unwary, and leading them into ruin. Hence offences come, and many of the young and thoughtless are led astray. But He who has all power has pronounced woe upon seducers, and judgment will not always linger. No class of men have a more fearful account to render to God than they who thus lead others into vice and infidelity.

VII. We must forsake our dearest sin. Ver. 8, 9. We must do this, or go to hell-fire. There is no way of avoiding it. We cannot love and cherish those sins, and be saved.

VIII. The wicked—they who will not forsake their sins—must certainly go to eternal punishment. Ver. 8, 9. So said the compassionate Saviour. The fair and

obvious meaning of his words is, that the sufferings of hell are eternal. And Christ did not use words without meaning. He did not mean to frighten us by bug-bears, or to hold up imaginary fears. If Christ speaks of hell, then there is a hell. If he says it is eternal, then it is so. Of this we may be sure, that every word which the God of mercy has spoken about the punishment of the wicked is full of meaning.

IX. Christians are protected. Ver. 10. Angels are appointed as their friends and guardians. Those friends are very near to God. They enjoy his favour, and his children shall be safe.

X. Christians are safe. Ver. 11—14. Jesus came to save them. He left the heavens for this end. God rejoices in their salvation. He secures it at great sacrifices, and none can pluck them out of his hand. After the coming of Jesus to save them, after all that he has done for that, and that only, after the joy of God and angels at their recovery, it is impossible that they should be wrested from him and destroyed. See John x. 27, 28.

XI. It is our duty to admonish our brethren when they injure us. Ver. 15. We have no right to speak of the offence to any one else, not even to our best friends, until we have given the offender an opportunity to explain.

XII. The way to treat offending brethren is clearly pointed out. Ver. 15, 16, 17. Nor have we a right to take any other course. Infinite Wisdom, the Prince of peace, has declared that this is the way to treat our brethren. No other can be right; and no other, therefore, can be so well adapted to promote the peace of the church. And yet how different from this is the course commonly pursued! How few go honestly to an offending brother, and tell him his fault! Instead of this, every breeze bears the report; it is magnified, mole-hills swell to mountains, and a quarrel of years often succeeds what might have been settled at once. No robber is so cruel as he who steals away the character of another. Nothing can compensate for the loss of this. Wealth, health, mansions, and equipage, all are trifles compared with this. Especially is this true of a Christian. His reputation gone, he has lost his power of doing good; he has brought dishonour on the cause he most loved; he has

lost his peace and worlds cannot repay him.

"Who steals my purse, steals trash: 'tis something, nothing:  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.  
But he that filches from me my good name,  
Robs me of that which not enriches him,  
And makes me poor indeed."

XIII. We have every encouragement to pray. Ver. 20. We are poor, and sinful, and dying, and none can comfort us but God. At his throne we may find all that we want. We know not which is most wonderful, that God deigns to hear our prayers, or that men are unwilling to use so simple and easy a way of obtaining what they so much need.

XIV. We should never be weary of forgiving our brethren. Ver. 22. We should do it cheerfully. We should do it always. We are never better employed than when we are doing good to those who have injured us. Thus doing, we are most like God.

XV. There will be a day in which we must give up our account. Ver. 23. It may wait long; but God will reckon with us, and every thing shall be brought into judgment.

XVI. We are greatly indebted to God, far, far beyond what we are able to pay. Ver. 24. We have sinned, and in no way can we make atonement for past sins. But Jesus the Saviour has made atonement, and paid our debt, and we may be free.

XVII. It is right to pray to God when we feel that we have sinned, and are unable to pay the debt. Ver. 26. We have no other way. Poor, and needy, and wretched, we must cast ourselves upon his mercy, or die, die for ever.

XVIII. God will have compassion on those who pray. Ver. 27. At his feet in the attitude of prayer, the burdened sinner finds peace. We have no where else to go but to the very Being that we have offended. No being but he can save us from death.

XIX. From the kindness of God to us we should learn not to oppress others. Ver. 28.

XX. It is our true interest as well as duty to forgive those that offend us. Ver. 34. God will take vengeance; and in due time we must suffer, if we do not forgive others.

CHAPTER XIX.

*Marriage and divorce, 3—12. Little children received and blessed, 13—15. The young rich man proved wanting, 16—26. Sacrifices for Christ rewarded, 27—30.*

AND it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he<sup>1</sup> departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan;

2 And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

3 ¶ The Pharisees also came unto him,<sup>2</sup> tempting him, and say-

<sup>1</sup> Mark x. 1. John x. 40. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xvi. 1; xxii. 16—18, 35. Luke xi. 53, 54.

XXI. Christians are often great sufferers for harbouring malice. As a punishment, God withdraws the light of his countenance, they walk in darkness, they cannot enjoy religion, their conscience smites them, and they are wretched. No man ever did, or ever can enjoy religion, who did not, from his heart, forgive his brother his trespasses.

XXII. One reason why Christians ever walk in darkness is, that there is some such duty neglected. They think they have been injured, and very possibly they may have been. They think they are in the right, and possibly they are so. But, mingled with a consciousness of this is an unforgiving spirit; and they cannot enjoy religion till that is subdued.

XXIII. Forgiveness must not be in word merely, but from the heart. Ver. 35. No other can be genuine. No other is like God.

CHAPTER XIX.

1—12. See also Mark x. 1—12.

1. *Coasts of Judæa beyond Jordan.* Probably our Saviour was then going from Galilee up to Jerusalem, to one of the great feasts of the Jews. Samaria was between Galilee and Jerusalem; and choosing not to go through it, he crossed the Jordan, and passed down on the east side of that river, through Peræa, a region of country belonging to Judæa, formerly a part of the tribes Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. See any map of Palestine. ¶ *Coasts of Judæa.* Regions or parts of Judæa. See Note on Matt. ii. 16.

ing unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that<sup>3</sup> he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For<sup>4</sup> this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What<sup>5</sup> there-

<sup>3</sup> Gen. i. 27; v. 2. Mal. ii. 15. <sup>4</sup> Gen. ii. 24. Eph. v. 31. <sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 10.

3. *The Pharisees came.* See Note, Matt. iii. 7. ¶ *Tempting him.* This means, to get him, if possible, to express an opinion that should involve him in difficulty. There was the more art in this captious question which they proposed, as at that time the people were very much divided on the subject. A part, following the opinions of Hillel, said that a man might divorce his wife for any offence, or any dislike he might have of her. Note Matt. v. 31. Others of the school of Shammai, maintained that divorce was unlawful, except in case of adultery. Whatever opinion, therefore, Christ expressed, they expected that he would involve himself in difficulty with one of these parties.

4—6. *And he answered and said, &c.* Instead of referring to the opinions of either party, Jesus called their attention to the original design of marriage, to the authority of Moses, an authority acknowledged by them both. ¶ *Have ye not read, Gen. i. 27; ii. 21, 22.* ¶ *And said, For this cause, &c. Gen. ii. 24.* That is, God at the beginning made but one man and one woman; their posterity should learn that the original intention of marriage was that a man should have but one wife. ¶ *Shall leave his father and mother.* This means, shall bind himself more strongly to his wife than he was bound to his father or mother. The marriage connexion is the most tender and endearing of all human relations, more tender than even that bond which unites us to a parent. ¶ *And shall cleave unto*

fore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why<sup>1</sup> did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxiv. 1. Isa. 1. 1.

*his wife.* The word *cleave* denotes a union of the firmest kind. It is in the original taken from gluing, and means so firmly to adhere together that nothing can separate them. ¶ *They twain shall be one flesh.* That is, they two, or they that were two, shall be united as one; one in law, in feeling, in interest, and in affection. They shall no longer have separate interests, but shall act in all things as if they were one, animated by one soul and one wish. The argument of *Jesus* here is, that since they are so intimately united as to be one, and since in the beginning God made but one woman for one man, it follows that they cannot be separated but by the authority of God. Man may not put away his wife for every cause. What God has joined together man may not put asunder. In this decision he really decided in favour of one of the parties; and it shows that when it was proper, *Jesus* answered questions, from whatever cause they might have been proposed, and however much difficulty it might involve him in. Our Lord in this also showed consummate wisdom. He answered the question, not from Hillel or Shammai, their teachers, but from Moses; and thus defeated their malice.

7. *Why did Moses, &c.* To this they objected that Moses had allowed such divorces, Deut. xxiv. 1; and if he had allowed them, they inferred that they could not be unlawful. See Note, Matt. v. 31.

8. *He saith unto them, &c.* *Jesus* admits that this was allowed; but still he contends that this was not the original design of marriage. It was only a temporary expedient, growing out of a peculiar state of things, and not designed to be perpetual. It was on account of the hardness of their hearts. Moses found the custom in use. He found a hard-hearted and rebellious people. In this state of things he did not deem it prudent

8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the<sup>2</sup> beginning it was not so.

9 And I say unto you, Whoso-

<sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 32. Gen. ii. 24.

to forbid a practice so universal; but it might be regulated; and, instead of suffering the husband to divorce his wife in a passion, he required him, in order that he might take time to consider the matter, and thus make it probable that divorces would be less frequent, to give her a writing; to sit down deliberately, to look at the matter, and probably also to bring the case before some scribe or learned man, to write a divorce in the legal form. Thus doing, there might be an opportunity for the matter to be reconciled, and the man to be persuaded not to divorce his wife. This, says our Saviour, was a permission growing out of a particular state of things, and designed to remedy a prevailing evil. But at first it was not so. God intended that marriage should be between one man and one woman, and that they were only to be separated by appointment of him who had formed the union. ¶ *Hardness of your hearts.* He speaks here of his hearers as a part of the nation. The hardness of you Jews; as when Americans say, we fought with England, and gained our independence. That is, we the American people, though it was done by their fathers. He does not mean to say, therefore, that this was done on account of the people that he addressed, but of the national hardness of heart, the cruelty of the Jewish people as a people.

9. *And I say unto you.* Emphasis should be laid here on the word *I*. This was the opinion of *Jesus*, this he proclaimed to be the law of his kingdom, this the command of God ever afterwards. Indulgence had been given by the laws of Moses; but that indulgence was to cease, and the marriage relation to be brought back to its original intention. Only one offence was to make divorce lawful. This is the law of God. And by the same law, all marriages which take place after divorce where adultery is not the cause of divorce, are adulterous.

ever <sup>1</sup> shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

10 ¶ His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.<sup>2</sup>

11 But he said unto them, All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvi. 18. <sup>2</sup> Prov. xix. 13; xxi. 9, 19.

Legislatures have no right to say that men may put away their wives for any other cause; and where they do, and where there is marriage afterwards, by the law of God such marriages are adulterous.

10. *His disciples say, &c.* The disciples were full of Jewish notions. They thought that the privilege of divorcing a wife when there was a quarrelsome disposition, or any thing else that rendered the marriage unhappy, was a great privilege; and that in such cases to be always bound to live with a wife was a great calamity. They said, therefore, that if such was the case, such the condition on which men married, it was better not to marry.

11. *All men cannot receive this saying.* The minds of men are not prepared for this. *This saying* evidently means what the disciples had just said, that it was good for a man not to marry. It might be good in certain circumstances, in times of persecution and trial, or for the sake of labouring in the cause of religion, without the care and burden of a family. It might be good for many to live as some of the apostles did, without marriage, but it was not given to all men. 1 Cor. vii. 1, 7, 9. To be married or unmarried, might be lawful according to circumstances. 1 Cor. vii. 26.

12. Jesus proceeds to state that there were some who were able to receive that saying, and to remain in an unmarried state. Some were so born; some were made such by the cruelty of men; and some voluntarily abstained from marriage for the kingdom of heaven's sake; that is, that they might devote themselves entirely to the proper business of religion. Perhaps he refers here to the Essenes, a sect of

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mothers' womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's <sup>3</sup> sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

13 ¶ Then were there brought unto him little children, that he

<sup>3</sup> Isa. lvi. 3-5. 1 Cor. vii. 32.

the Jews, see Note, Matt. iii. 7, who held that marriage was unsuitable to their condition, who had no children of their own, but perpetuated their sect by adopting the poor children of others. Eunuchs were employed chiefly in attending on the females, or in the harem. They rose often to distinction, and held important offices in the state. Hence the word sometimes denotes such an officer of state. Acts viii. 37.

13. *Then were brought little children.* See also Mark x. 13-16. Luke xviii. 15-17. Probably these were brought by some of his followers, who desired not only to devote themselves to Jesus, but all that they had, their children as well as themselves. All the Jews were accustomed to devote their children to God by circumcision. It was natural, therefore, under the new dispensation, that it should be done. Luke says they were infants. They were undoubtedly those who were not old enough to come by choice, but their coming was an act of the parents. ¶ *Put his hands on them and pray.* It was customary among the Jews, when blessings were sought for others in prayer, to lay the hands on the head of the person prayed for, implying a kind of consecration to God. See Gen. xlviii. 14. Matt. ix. 18. They had also much confidence in the prayers of pious men; believing that those blessed by a saint or a prophet would be happy. See Num. xxii. 6. Luke ii. 28. ¶ *The disciples rebuked them.* That is, reproved them, or told them it was improper. This they did probably, either, 1. Because they thought they were too young; or, 2. Because they thought they would be troublesome to their Master.

put his hands on them, and the disciples rebuked

But Jesus said, Suffer <sup>1</sup> little children, and forbid them not, to come into me : for of such <sup>2</sup> is the kingdom of heaven.

. 14. Luke xviii. 16, 17. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 3.

Jesus said, *Suffer little children*, Mark adds, he was much displeased the disciples said. It was a thing gratifying to him, and which he sought, that children should be brought to him ; and a case where it was proper that they should interfere. *Such is the kingdom of heaven.* The kingdom of heaven evidently means, the church. Note, Matt. iii. 2. In Luke it is said he immediately "Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein." Whoever shall not be humble, unambitious, and docile, shall not be a follower of Christ, or a member of the kingdom. Of such as these, that are persons with such tempers as these, the church to be composed. He does not mean of those infants, but of such persons who resembled them, or were like them in character, was the kingdom of heaven upon earth. It was proper, therefore, that he should pray for them. It was proper for one who possessed such a temper to be brought to him. The disposition of humility, the teachableness, the absence of ambition, was an ornament to them, and little children should be brought to him. It is profitable to be greatly to be hoped—that all will be saved. No contrary doctrine is taught in the sacred scriptures. It does not appear to be the design of the passage to teach that all infants are saved. It means simply that they who are suffered to be brought to him, who are humble, lovely, and uncorrupted by the world, and having traits of mind resembling those among real Christians.

He laid his hands on them. Mark adds : blessed them. That is, he prayed for and sought a blessing on them.

30. This account is found also in Matt. 17—31. Luke xviii. 18—30.

One came. This was a young man. He was a ruler (Luke); probably

15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

16 ¶ And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why

<sup>2</sup> Mark x. 17. Luke x. 25; xviii. 18.

a ruler in a synagogue, or of the great council of the nation ; a place to which he was chosen on account of his unblemished character and promising talents. He came running (Mark) ; evincing great earnestness and anxiety. He fell upon his knees (Mark) ; not to worship him, but to pay the customary respectful salutation ; exhibiting the highest regard for Jesus as an extraordinary religious teacher.

¶ *Good Master.* The word *good* here means, doubtless, most excellent ; referring not so much to the moral character of Jesus as to his character as a religious teacher. It was probably a title which the Jews were in the habit of applying to their religious teachers. The word *master* here means teacher. ¶ *What good thing shall I do?* He had attempted to keep all the commandments. He had been taught by his Jewish teachers that men were to be saved by doing something, or by their works ; and he supposed that this was to be the way under every system of religion. He had lived externally a blameless life ; but yet he was not at peace : he was anxious, and he came to ascertain what, in the view of Jesus, was to be done, that his righteousness might be complete. To have eternal life means to be saved. The happiness of heaven is called life, in opposition to the pains of hell, called death, or an eternal dying. Rev. ii. 11 ; xx. 14. The one is real life, answering the purposes of living ; living to the honour of God, and in eternal happiness ; the other is a failure of the great ends of existence, prolonged, eternal suffering, of which temporal death is but the feeble image.

17. *Why callest thou me good?* Why do you give me a title that belongs only to God? You suppose me to be only a man. Yet you give me an appellation that belongs only to God. It is improper to use titles in this manner. As you Jews use them, they are unmeaning. And

callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God*: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt <sup>1</sup> do no mur-

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xx. 13. Deut. v. 17—21.

though the title may apply to me, yet you did not intend to use it in the sense in which it is proper, as denoting infinite perfection, or divinity; but you intended to use it as a complimentary or a flattering title, applied to me as if I were a mere man—a title which belongs only to God. The intention, the habit of using mere titles, and applying as compliment terms belonging only to God, is wrong. Christ did not intend here to disclaim divinity, or to say any thing about his own character; but simply to reprove the intention and habit of the young man—a most severe reproof of a foolish habit of compliment and flattery, and seeking pompous titles. ¶ *Keep the commandments.* That is, do what God has commanded. Jesus, in the next verses, informs him what he meant by the commandments. He said this, doubtless, to try the young man, and to convince him that he had by no means kept the commandments; and that in supposing he had, he was altogether deceived. The young man thought he had kept them, and was relying on this for salvation. It was of great importance, therefore, to convince him that he was, after all, a sinner. Christ did not mean to say that any man would be saved by the works of the law, for the Bible teaches plainly that such will not be the case. Rom. iii. 20, 28; iv. 6. Gal. ii. 16. Eph. ii. 9. 2 Tim. i. 9. At the same time, however, it is true that if a man perfectly complied with the requirements of the law, he would be saved; for there would be no reason why he should be condemned. Jesus, therefore, since he saw the young man depending on his works, told him that if he would enter life he must keep the commandments; if he was depending on his keeping of them, he must keep them perfectly; and if this was done, he would be saved. The reasons why Christ gave him this direction were, probably: 1. *Because it was his duty to keep them.* 2. *Because the young man depended on his*

der, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou <sup>2</sup> shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xix. 18. Gal. v. 14. Jas. ii. 8.

obedience, and he ought to understand what was required if he did, that the commandments should be kept perfectly, or that they were not kept at all. 3. *Because he wanted to test him, to show him that he did not keep them, and thus to show him his need of a Saviour.*

18, 19. In reply to the inquiry of the young man, Jesus directed him to the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth, Exod. xx. 12—16, as containing the substance of the whole, as containing particularly what he intended to show him, that he had not kept. See Notes, Matt. v. 21, 27. ¶ *Not steal.* To steal is to take the property of another without his knowledge or consent. ¶ *Bear false witness.* Give testimony contrary to truth. This may be done in a court of justice, or by private or public slander. It means to say things of another which are not true. ¶ *Honour thy father, &c.* That is, 1. Obey them, keep their commands. Eph. vi. 1—3. Col. iii. 20. 2. Respect them, show them reverence. 3. Treat their opinions with regard—not despise them, or ridicule them. 4. Treat their habits with respect. They may be different from ours; may be antiquated, and to us strange, odd, or whimsical; but they are the habits of a parent, and they are not to be ridiculed. 5. Provide for them when sick, weary, old, and infirm. Bear with their weakness, comply with their wishes, speak to them kindly, and deny yourselves of rest, and sleep, and ease, to promote their welfare. To this he added another—the duty of loving our neighbour. Lev. xix. 18. This Christ declared to be the second great commandment of the law. Matt. xxii. 39. A *neighbour* means, 1. Any person who lives near to us. 2. Any person with whom we have dealings. 3. A friend or relative. Matt. v. 43. 4. Any person—friend, relative, countryman, or foe. Mark xii. 31. 5. Any person who does us good, or confers a favour on us. Luke

20 The young man saith unto him,<sup>1</sup> All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

<sup>1</sup> Luke xv. 7, 29; xviii. 11. Rom. iii. 19—23.

x. 27—37. This commandment means evidently, 1. That we should not injure our neighbour in his person, property, or character. 2. That we should not be supremely selfish, and should seek to do him good. 3. That in a case of debt, difference, or debate, we should do what is right, regarding his interest as much as our own, and not being influenced by a love of self. 4. That we should treat his character, property, &c. as we do our own, according to what is right. 5. That in order to benefit him we should practise self-denial, or do as we should wish him to do to us. Matt. vii. 12. It does not mean, 1. That the love of ourselves, according to what we are, or according to truth, is improper. The happiness of myself is of as much importance as that of any other man; and it is as proper that it should be sought. It does not mean, 2. That I am to neglect my own business to take care of my neighbour's. My happiness, salvation, health, and family, are committed peculiarly to myself; and provided I do not interfere with my neighbour's rights, or violate my obligations to him, it is my duty to seek the welfare of my own as my first duty. 1 Tim. v. 8. Titus ii. 5. Mark adds to these commandments, "Defraud not;" by which he meant, doubtless, to express the substance of this, to love our neighbour as ourself. To *defraud*, means, literally, to take away the property of another by violence or by deceiving him; thus showing that he is not loved as we love ourselves.

20. *All these, &c.* I have made these the rule of my life. I have endeavoured to obey them. Is there anything that I lack, any new commandments to be kept? Do you, the Messiah, teach any new commands, besides those which I have learned from the law, and from the Jewish teachers, which it is proper for me to obey, in order to be saved?

21. *If thou wilt be perfect.* The word *perfect* means complete in all its parts, finished, having no part wanting. Thus a watch is perfect, or complete, when it has

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go<sup>2</sup> and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and

<sup>2</sup> Luke xii. 33; xvi. 9. Acts ii. 45; iv. 34, 35. 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.

all its proper wheels, and hands, and casements in order. Job was said to be perfect, Job i. 1; not that he was sinless, for he was afterwards reproved by God himself, Job xxxviii., xxxix., xl. 4: but because his piety was proportioned, and had a completeness of parts. He was a pious father, a pious magistrate, a pious neighbour, a pious citizen. His religion was not confined to one thing, but extended to all things. *Perfect* means, sometimes, the filling up or carrying out, or expression of a principle of action. Thus, 1 John ii. 5: "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." That is, the keeping of the commandments of God is the proper expression, carrying out, or completion, of the love of God. This is its meaning here: If thou wilt be perfect, complete, finished; if thou wilt show the proper expression of this keeping of the commandments, go, &c. Make the obedience complete.

Mark says, ch. x. 21, "Jesus, beholding him, loved him." He was pleased with his amiableness, his correct character, his frankness, and ingenuousness. Jesus, as a man, was capable of all the emotions of most tender friendship. As a man, we may suppose that his disposition was tender and affectionate, mild and calm. Hence he loved with peculiar affection the disciple John, eminently endowed with these qualities. And hence he was pleased with the same traits in this young man. Still, with all this amiableness, there is reason to think the young man was not a Christian; and that the love of mere amiable qualities was all the affection that was ever bestowed on him by the Saviour.

"One thing," adds Mark, "thou lackest." There is one thing wanting. You are not complete. This done, you would show that your obedience lacked no essential part, but was complete, finished, proportionate, perfect. ¶ *Go and sell that thou hast, &c.* The young man declared that he had kept the law. That law required, among other things, that he should love his neighbour as himself. It required also that he should



thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and follow*<sup>1</sup> me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful:<sup>2</sup> for he had great possessions.

<sup>1</sup> John xii. 26.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. xlii. 22.

love the Lord his God supremely; that is, more than all other objects. If he had that true love to God and man; if he loved his Maker and fellow creatures more than he did his property, he would be willing to give up his wealth to the service of God and of man. Jesus commanded him to do this therefore, to test his character, and to show him that he had not kept the law as he pretended; and thus to show him that he needed a better righteousness than his own. ¶ *Treasure in heaven.* See Note, Matt. vi. 20. ¶ *Follow me.* To follow Jesus, then meant to be a personal attendant on his ministry; to go about with him from place to place, as well as to imitate and obey him. It means now; 1. To obey his commandments. 2. To imitate his example, and to live like him.

22. *He had great possessions.* He was very rich. He made an idol of them. He loved them more than God. He had not kept the commandments from his youth up, nor had he kept them at all. And rather than do good with his treasures, and seek his salvation by obeying God, this young man chose to turn away from the Saviour, and give over his inquiry about eternal life. He probably returned no more. Alas, how many lovely and amiable young persons follow his example!

23. *Shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Shall with difficulty be saved. He has much to struggle with; and it will require the greatest of human efforts to break away from his temptations, and idols, and secure his salvation.

24. *It is easier for a camel, &c.* This was a proverb in common use among the Jews, and still common among the Arabians. To denote that a thing was impossible, or exceedingly difficult, they said that a camel or an elephant might as soon walk through a needle's eye. In the use of such proverbs, it is not necessary to understand them literally, but only to

23 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that<sup>3</sup> a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10; Jer. xlii. 22.

denote the extreme difficulty of the case. ¶ *A camel.* A beast of burden, much used in eastern countries. It is about the size of the largest ox, with one or two bunches on his back, with long neck and legs, no horns, and with feet adapted to the hot and dry sand. Camels are capable of carrying heavy burdens; will travel sometimes faster than the fleetest horse; and are provided with a stomach which they fill with water, by means of which they can live four or five days without drink. They are very mild and tame, and kneel down to receive and give up their burden. They are chiefly used in deserts and hot climates, where other beasts of burden are with difficulty kept alive. ¶ *A rich man.* This rather means one who loves his riches, and makes an idol of them; or one who supremely desires to be rich. Mark says, "them that trust in riches." While a man has this feeling, it is literally impossible that he should be a Christian. For religion is the love of God, rather than the world; the love of Jesus and his cause, more than gold. Still a man may have much property, and not have this feeling. He may have great wealth, and love God more; as a poor man may have little, and love that little more than God. The difficulties in the way of salvation for a rich man are: 1. That riches engross the affections. 2. Men consider wealth as the chief good; and when this is obtained think they have gained all. 3. They are proud of their wealth, and unwilling to be numbered with the poor and despised followers of Jesus. 4. Riches engross the time, and fill the mind with cares and anxieties, and leave little for God. 5. They often produce luxury, dissipation, and vice. 6. It is difficult to obtain wealth without sin, or without avarice, as covetousness, and fraud, and oppression. Luke xii. 16—21; xvi. 19—31. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 17. Jas. v. 1—5. Still Jesus says, ver. 26, all these may be overcome

the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but <sup>1</sup> with God all things are possible.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lli. 8; lxii. 11. Zech. viii. 6.

God can give grace to do it. Though to men it may appear impossible, yet it is *easy* for God.

27. *We have forsaken all.* Probably nothing but their fishing nets, small boats, and cottages. But they were their all; their living, their home. And forsaking *them*, they had as really shown their sincerity, as though they had possessed the gold of Ophir, and dwelt in the palaces of kings. ¶ *What shall we have, therefore?* We have done as thou didst command this young man to do. What reward may we expect for it?

28. *Verily I say unto you.* Jesus in this verse declares the reward which they would have. They were not to look for it now, but in a future period. ¶ *In the regeneration.* This word occurs but once elsewhere in the New Testament. Tit. iii. 5. It literally means a new birth, or being born again. Applied to man it denotes the great change when the heart is renewed, or when the sinner begins to be a Christian. This is its meaning clearly in Titus. But this meaning cannot be applied here. Christ was not born again, and in no proper sense could it be said that they had followed him in the new birth. The word also means any great changes, or restoration of things to a former state, or to a better state. In this sense it is probably used here. It refers to that great revolution; that restoration of order in the universe; that universal new birth when the dead shall rise, and all human things shall be changed, and a new order of things shall start up out of the ruins of the old, when the Son of man shall come to judgment. The passage, then, should be read, 'Ye which have followed me, shall, as a reward in the great day of the resurrection of the dead, and of forming the new and eternal order

27 ¶ Then <sup>2</sup> answered Peter and said unto him. Behold, we have forsaken all,<sup>3</sup> and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye

<sup>2</sup> Mark x. 28. Luke xviii. 28. <sup>3</sup> Phil. iii. 8.

of things, the day of judgment, the regeneration, be signally honoured and blessed.' ¶ *When the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory.* That is, to judge the world. *Throne of glory* means glorious throne, or a splendid throne. It is not to be taken literally, but is used to denote the character of Jesus as a king and judge, and to signify the great dignity and majesty which will be displayed by him. See Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64. Acts i. 11; xvii. 31. ¶ *Sit upon twelve thrones.* This is figurative. To sit on a throne denotes power and honour; and means here that they should be distinguished above others, and be more highly honoured and rewarded. ¶ *Judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* Jesus will be the judge of quick and dead. He only is qualified for it; and the Father hath given all judgment to the Son. John v. 22. To judge, denotes rank, authority, power. The ancient judges of Israel were men of distinguished courage, patriotism, honour, and valour. Hence the word comes to denote, not so much an actual exercise of the power of passing judgment, as the honour attached to the office. And as earthly kings have around them those who are dignified with honours and office, counsellors and judges; so Christ says his apostles shall occupy the same relative station in the great day. They shall be honoured by him, and by all, as apostles; as having in the face of persecution left all; as having laid the foundations of his church, and endured all the maddened persecutions of the world. ¶ *The twelve tribes of Israel.* This was the number of the ancient tribes. By this name the people of God were denoted. By this name Jesus here denotes his redeemed people. See also Jas. i. 1, where Christians are called the twelve tribes. Here it also

also shall sit <sup>1</sup> upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And <sup>2</sup> every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xx. 21. Luke xxii. 28—30. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. Rev. ii. 26. <sup>2</sup> Mark x. 29, 30. Luke xviii. 29, 30. 1 Cor. ii. 9.

means, not the Jews, not the world, not the wicked, not that the apostles are to pronounce sentence on the enemies of God, but the people of God, the redeemed. Among them Jesus says his apostles shall be honoured in the day of judgment, as earthly kings place in posts of office and honour the counsellors and judges of those who have signally served them. Compare Notes on 1 Cor. vi. 2.

29. *Forsaken houses, &c.* In the days of Jesus those who followed him were obliged generally to forsake houses and home, and to attend him. In our times it is not often required that we should literally leave home, except when the life is devoted to him among the heathen, but it is always required that we love houses, &c. less than we do him; that we give up all that is inconsistent with religion, and be ready to give up all when he demands it. ¶ *For my name's sake.* From attachment to me. Mark adds, "and for the gospel's;" that is, from obedience to the requirements of the gospel, and love for the service of the gospel. ¶ *Shall receive an hundredfold.* Mark says, "an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters," &c. An *hundredfold* means a hundred times as much. This is not to be understood literally, but that he will give what will be worth a hundred times as much, in the peace, and joy, and rewards of religion. It is also literally true that no man's temporal interest is injured by the love of God. Mark adds, "with persecutions." These are not promised as a part of the reward; but amidst their trials and persecutions, they should find reward and peace.

30. This verse should have been connected with the following chapter. The parable there spoken is expressly to illustrate this sentiment. See its meaning, ch. xx. 16.

## REMARKS.

I. We should not throw ourselves un-

der children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold; and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But <sup>3</sup> many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xx. 16; xxi. 31, 32. Mark x. 31. Luke xlii. 30. Gal. v. 7. Heb. iv. 1.

necessarily in the way of the enemies of religion. Ver. 1. Jesus, to avoid the Samaritans, crossed the Jordan, and took a more distant route to Jerusalem. If duty calls us in the way of the enemies of religion, we should go. If we can do them good, we should go. If our presence will only provoke them to anger and bitterness, then we should turn aside. Compare Note on ch. x. 23.

II. Men will seek every occasion to ensnare Christians. Ver. 3. Questions will be proposed with great art, and with an appearance of sincerity, only for the purpose of leading them into difficulty. Cunning men know well how to propose such questions, and triumph much when they have perplexed believers. This is often the boast of men of some standing, who think they accomplish the great purposes of their existence, if they can confound other men; and think it signal triumph if they can make others as miserable as themselves.

III. We should not refuse to answer such persons with mildness, when the Bible has settled the question. Ver. 4—6. Jesus answered a captious question, proposed on purpose to ensnare him. We may often do much to confound the enemies of religion, and to recommend it, when without passion we hear their inquiries, and deliberately inform them that the question has been settled by God. We had better, however, far better, say nothing in reply, than to answer in anger, or to show that we are irritated. All the object of the enemy is gained, if he can make us mad.

IV. Men will search and pervert the Bible, for authority to indulge their sin, and to perplex Christians. Ver. 7. No device is more common than to produce a passage of scripture, known to be misquoted or perverted, yet plausible, for the purpose of perplexing Christians. In such cases, the best way is often to say nothing. If answered, men will be

d of it; if answered, they gain  
saint, and are ready for debate and

We learn from this chapter that  
no union so intimate as the mar-  
riage union. Ver. 6. Nothing is so  
and endearing as this union ap-  
proved by God for the welfare of man.  
This union should not be entered  
lightly or rashly. It involves all  
the happiness of this life, and much of  
to come. The union demands:  
1. Equality of feeling and disposition;  
rank or standing in life; 3. Of  
age; 4. Similarity of acquirements;  
5. Of talent; 7. Intimate ac-  
quaintance. It should also be a union of  
feelings and opinions: 1. Be-  
cause religion is more important than  
any else. 2. Because it will give  
happiness in the married life than  
any else. 3. Because where one  
is pious, there is danger that religion  
will be obscured and blighted. 4. Because  
earthly life is so painful as that of eternal  
life. 5. Because it is heathenish,  
and mud, to partake the gifts of  
a family, and offer no thanks,  
and inexpressibly wicked to live  
day to day as if there were no God,  
heaven, no hell. 6. Because death is  
and nothing will soothe the pangs  
except but the hope of meeting in the  
eternity of the just.

No human legislature has a right  
to divorce, except in one single  
case. Ver. 9. If they do, they are ac-  
cused to the crime that may follow,  
to assume to legislate where God has  
decided before them.

1. Those thus divorced, or pre-  
tending to be divorced, and marrying  
again, are, by the declaration of Jesus  
living in adultery. Ver. 9. It is  
not to say that the law of the land  
binds them. The law had no such  
power. If all the legislatures of the world  
should say that it was lawful for a man  
to marry, and commit murder, it would  
not make it so; and in spite of human  
legislation, God would hold a man an-  
swerable for theft and murder. So also  
for adultery.

The marriage union demands  
faith and love. Ver. 6. Husband  
and wife are one. Love to each other is  
as a second self. Hatred, and anger,  
quarrels, are against ourselves. And

the evils and quarrels in married life will  
descend on ourselves, and be gall and  
wormwood in our own cup.

X. Infants may be brought to Jesus to  
receive his blessing. Ver. 12—15. While  
on earth, Jesus admitted them to his  
presence, and blessed them with his  
prayers. If they might be brought then,  
they may be brought now. Their souls  
are as precious, their dangers are as great,  
their salvation is as important. A parent  
should require the most indubitable evi-  
dence that Jesus will not receive his  
offspring, and will be displeased if the  
offering is made, to deter him from this  
inestimable privilege.

XI. If children may be brought, they  
should be brought. It is the solemn  
duty of a parent to seize upon all possible  
means of benefiting his children, and of  
presenting them to God, to implore his  
blessing. In family prayer, and in the  
sanctuary, the ordinance of baptism, the  
blessing of the Redeemer should be sought  
early and constantly on their precious  
and immortal souls.

XII. Earnestness and deep anxiety  
are proper in seeking salvation. Ver. 16.  
The young man came running; he  
kneeled. It was not form and ceremony;  
it was life and reality. Religion is a  
great subject. Salvation is beyond the  
power of utterance in importance. Eter-  
nity is near, and damnation thunders  
along the path of the guilty. The sinner  
must be saved soon, or die for ever. He  
cannot be too earnest. He cannot press  
with too great haste to Jesus. He should  
come running, and kneeling, and humbled,  
and lifting the agonized cry, "What  
shall I do to be saved?"

XIII. He should come young. Ver. 20.  
He cannot come too young. God has the  
first claim on our affections. He made  
us; he keeps us; he provides for us; and  
it is right that we should give our first  
affections to him. No one who has  
become a Christian ever yet felt that he  
had become one too young. No young  
person that has given his heart to the  
Redeemer ever yet regretted it. They  
may give up the gay world to do it; they  
may leave the circles of the dance and  
the song; they may be exposed to con-  
tempt and persecution, but no matter.  
He who becomes a true Christian, no  
matter of what age or rank, blesses God  
that he was inclined to do it, and the

time never can come when for one moment he will regret it. Why then will not the young give their hearts to the Saviour, and do that which they know they never can for one moment regret?

XIV. It is no dishonour for those who hold offices, and who are men of rank, to inquire on the subject of religion. Luke xviii. 18. Men of rank often suppose that it is only the weak, and credulous, and ignorant, that ever feel any anxiety about religion. Never was a greater mistake. It has been only profligate, and weak, and ignorant men, that have been thoughtless. Two-thirds of all the profound investigations of the world have been on this very subject. The wisest and best of the heathens have devoted their lives to inquire about God, and their own destiny. So in Christian lands. Were Bacon, Newton, Locke, Milton, Hale, and Berhaave, men of weak minds? Yet their deepest thoughts and most anxious inquiries were on this very subject. Were Washington, Ames, Henry, Jay, and Rush, American worthies, men of weak minds? Yet they were profound believers in revelation. And yet young men of rank, and wealth, and learning, often think they show great independence in refusing to think of what occupied the profound attention of these men, and fancy they are great only by refusing to tread in their steps. Never was a greater or more foolish mistake. If any thing demands attention, it is surely the inquiry whether we are to be happy for ever, or wretched; whether there is a God and Saviour; or whether we are in a forsaken and fatherless world.

XV. It is as important for the rich to seek religion as the poor. They will as certainly die; they as much need religion. Without it they cannot be happy. Riches will drive away no pain on a death-bed; they will not go with us; they will not save us.

XVI. It is of special importance that wealthy young persons should be Christians. They are exposed to many dangers. The world, the gay and flattering world, will lead them astray. Fond of fashion, dress, and amusement, they are exposed to a thousand follies, from which nothing but religion can secure them. Besides, they may do much good; and God will hold them answerable for all the good they might have done with their wealth.

XVII. The amiable, the lovely, the moral, need also an interest in Christ. If amiable, we should suppose they would be ready to embrace the Saviour. None was ever so moral, so lovely, so pure, as he. If we really loved amiableness, then we should come to him. We should love him. But alas! how many amiable young persons turn away from him, and refuse to follow him! Can they be really lovers of that which is pure, and lovely? If so then why turn away from the Lamb of God?

XVIII. The amiable and the lovely need a better righteousness than their own. With all this, they may make an idol of the world; they may be proud, sensual, selfish, prayerless, and thoughtless about dying. Externally they appear lovely; but O how far is the heart from God!

XIX. Inquirers about religion often depend on their own works. Ver. 16. They are not willing to trust to Jesus for salvation; and they ask what they shall do. This is usually the case. And it is only when they find that they can do nothing, that they are poor, and helpless, and wretched, that they cast themselves on the mercy of God, and find peace.

XX. Compliments and flattering titles are evil. Ver. 17. They ascribe something to others which we know they do not possess. Often beauty is praised, where we know there is no beauty; accomplishment where there is no accomplishment; talent where there is no talent. Such praises are falsehood. We know them to be such. We intend to deceive by them; and we know that they will produce pride and vanity. Often they are used for the purpose of destruction. If a man praises us too much, we should look to our purse, or our virtue. We should feel that we are in danger, and the next thing will be a dreadful blow, the heavier for all this flattery. They that use compliments much, expect them from others; they are gulled and vexed when such compliments are not obtained, and are in danger when they are.

XXI. If we are to be saved, we must do just what God commands us. Ver. 17, 18. This is all we have to do. We are not to invent any thing of our own. God has marked out the course, and we must follow it.

XXII. We are easily deceived about

## CHAPTER XX.

*justice in rewarding—Parable of workers in the vineyard, 1—16. It foretells his death, 17—19. Wife Rebekah's ambition for her sons, 28. The blind man by the way-healed, 29—34.*

**R** the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an

g the law. Ver. 17. We often observe it, when it is only the form that we have kept. The spiritual; and God requires the

**II.** Riches are a blessing, if used if not, they are deceitful, dangerous. Ver. 23, 24. Thousands at their souls by the love of riches. we ever been saved by them.

**V.** It is our duty to forsake all. Ver. 27—29. Be it little or it is all the same to him. It is the hat he looks at; and we may as now our love by giving up a fishing-net, as a palace or a crown. If either case, it will be accepted.

**7.** Religion has its own rewards. 29. It gives more than it takes. than compensates for all that we suffer. It gives peace, joy, comfort and in death, and heaven beyond. the testimony of all Christians of eminences; of all that have lived, all that do live, that they never use peace till they found it in the

The testimony of so many must

They have tried the world in all as of gaiety, folly, and vice, and me and say with one voice, here true peace. On any other subject could be believed. Their testimony must be true.

**I.** Those eminent for usefulness will be received to distinguished and rewards in heaven. Ver. 28. that turn many to righteousness like as stars in the firmament for Dan. xii. 3.

## CHAPTER XX.

or the kingdom of heaven, &c. and for, shows that this chapter have been connected with the pre-

The parable was spoken expressly rate the sentiment in the last verse chapter. *The kingdom of heaven*

householder,<sup>1</sup> which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

**2** And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny<sup>2</sup> a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

<sup>1</sup> Can. viii. 11, 12. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 28.

means here the church, including perhaps its state here and hereafter. See Note, Matt. iii. 2. It has reference to rewards; and the meaning may be thus expressed: Rewards shall be bestowed in my kingdom, or on my followers, in the same manner as they were by a certain householder, in such a way as that the last shall be equal to the first, and the first to the last. ¶ *An householder.* A master of a family. One at the head of family affairs. ¶ *His vineyard.* No inconsiderable part of Judea was employed in the culture of the grape. Vineyards are often used, therefore, to represent a fertile or well-cultivated place; and hence the church, denoting the care and culture that God has bestowed on it. Isa. v. 7. Jer. xii. 10. For the manner of their construction, see Notes on Matt. xxi. 33.

**2. A penny a day.** The coin here referred to was a Roman coin, equal in value to about sevenpence halfpenny. The original denotes the Roman denarius, *δηνάριον*, a silver coin, which was originally equivalent to ten asses, a brass Roman coin, whence its name. The consular denarius bore on one side a head of Rome, and an X or a star to denote the value in asses, and a chariot with either two or four horses. At a later period the casts of different deities were on the obverse; and these were finally superseded by the heads of the Cæsars. Many specimens of this coin have been preserved.

It was probably at that time the price of a day's labour. This was the common wages of a Roman soldier. In England, before the discovery of the mines of gold and silver of South America, and consequently before money was plenty, the price of labour was about in proportion. In 1351 the price of labour was regulated by law, and was a penny a day. But provisions were of course proportionally cheap; and the avails of a man's labour

8 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?<sup>1</sup>

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith

unto them, <sup>2</sup> Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and <sup>3</sup> give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh<sup>4</sup> hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xix. 15. Ezek. xvi. 49. Acts xvii. 21. Heb. vi. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Eccl. ix. 10. John ix. 4. <sup>3</sup> Luke x. 7. <sup>4</sup> Luke xxiii. 40—43.

in articles of food were nearly as much as they are now.

3. *About the third hour.* The Jews divided their days into twelve equal parts, or hours, beginning at sunrise, and ending at sunset. This was, therefore, about nine o'clock in the morning. ¶ *Standing idle in the market-place.* A place where provisions are sold in towns. Of course many resort to such places; and it would be the readiest place to meet persons, and find employers. They were not, therefore, disposed to be idle, but were waiting in the proper place to find employers.

4. *Whatsoever is right.* Whatsoever it shall appear you can earn. The contract with the first was definite; with this one it depended on the judgment of the employer.

5. *The sixth and ninth hour.* That is, about twelve and three o'clock.

6. *The eleventh hour.* About five o'clock in the afternoon; or when there was but one working hour of the day left.

8. *When even was come.* That is, when the twelfth hour was come; the day was ended, and the time of payment was come. ¶ *The steward.* A steward is one who transacts business in the place of another. He was one who had the administration of affairs in the absence of the householder; who provided for the

family; and who was entrusted with the payment of labourers and servants. He was commonly the most trusty and faithful of the servants, raised to that station as a reward for his fidelity. ¶ *Beginning from the last unto the first.* It was immaterial where he began to pay, provided he dealt justly by them. In the parable, this order is mentioned to give opportunity for the remarks which follow. Had those first hired been first paid, they would have departed satisfied, and the point of the parable would have been lost.

9. *They received every man a penny.* There was no agreement how much they should receive, but merely that justice should be done. Ver. 4—7. The householder supposed they had earned it, or chose to make a present to them to compensate for the loss of the first part of the day, when they were willing to work but could not find employment.

10. *They supposed that they should have received more.* They had worked longer; they had been in the heat; they supposed that it was his intention to pay them, not according to contract, but according to the time of the labour.

11. *Murmured. Complained.* Found fault with. ¶ *The good man of the house.* The original here is the same word which in verse 1, is translated *householder*, and should have been so translated here. It

## CHAPTER XX.

Perea.

armured<sup>1</sup> against the good-  
e house,  
ring. These last <sup>2</sup> have  
but one hour, and thou  
e them equal unto us,  
e borne the burden and  
of the day.

he answered one of them,  
Friend, <sup>3</sup> I do thee no

29, 30. Acts xiii. 45, 46; xxii.  
x, have continued one hour only.

English way of denoting the  
family. It expresses no moral

*burden and heat of the day.*  
means the heavy labour, the

We have continued at that  
heat of the day. The others  
only a little while, and that  
of the evening, and when it  
ore pleasant and much less

nd, I do thee no wrong. I  
complied with the contract.  
a agreement, and I have ful-  
f I choose to give a penny to  
n if he labours little or not at  
ould choose to give all my  
ay to others, it would not affect  
t with you. That contract is  
nd with my own, with that on  
have no further claim, I may  
lease. So, if Christians are  
pay their lawful debts, and  
me, the world has no right to  
f they give the rest of their  
the poor, or devote it to send  
to the heathen, or to release  
r or the captive. It is their  
y have a right to do with  
please. They are answerable,  
t, but to God. And infidels,  
y men, and cold professors in  
have no right to interfere.

that thine is. Take what is  
o you, what is properly your

ine eye evil because I am good?  
ws used the word *evil*, when  
the eye, to denote one envious  
ous. Deut. xv. 10. Prov.  
he eye is called evil in such  
ue envy and malice show  
directly in the eye. No pas-

wrong: didst not thou agree with  
me for a penny?

14 Take *that* thine is, and go thy  
way: <sup>4</sup> I will give unto this last,  
even as unto thee.

15 Is <sup>5</sup> it not lawful for me to  
do what I will with mine own? Is <sup>6</sup>  
thine eye evil, because I am good?

16 So <sup>7</sup> the last shall be first, and

<sup>4</sup> John xvii. 2. <sup>5</sup> Rom. ix. 15—24. Jas.  
i. 18. <sup>6</sup> Ch. vi. 23. Deut. xv. 9. <sup>7</sup> Ch.  
xix. 30.

sions are so fully expressed by the eye as  
these. Does envy show itself in the eye;  
is thine eye so soon turned to express  
envy and malice, because I have chosen  
to do good?

16. *So the last shall be first*, &c. This  
is the moral or scope of the parable. To  
teach this it was spoken. Many that,  
in the order of time, shall be brought last  
into the kingdom, shall be first in the re-  
wards. Higher proportionate rewards  
shall be given to them than to others.  
To all justice shall be done. To all to  
whom the rewards of heaven were pro-  
mised, they shall be given. Nothing shall  
be withheld that was promised. If among  
this number who are called into the king-  
dom, I choose to raise some to stations of  
distinguished usefulness, and to confer on  
them peculiar talents and higher rewards,  
I injure no others. They shall enter  
heaven as was promised. If amidst the  
multitude of Christians, I choose to sig-  
nalize such men as Paul, and Martyn,  
and Brainerd, and Spencer, and Summer-  
field; to appoint some of them to short  
labour, but to wide usefulness, and raise  
them to signal rewards, I injure not the  
great multitude of others who live long  
lives less useful, and less rewarded. All  
shall reach heaven, and all shall receive  
what I promise to the faithful. ¶ *Many  
be called but few chosen.* The meaning  
of this in this connexion, I take to be  
simply this: Many are called into my  
kingdom; they come and labour as I  
command them; they are comparatively  
unknown and obscure. Yet they are real  
Christians, and shall receive the proper  
reward. A few I have chosen for higher  
stations in the church. I have endowed  
them with apostolic gifts, or superior  
talents, or wider usefulness. They may



the first last : for <sup>1</sup> many be called, but few chosen.

17 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxii. 14. 1 Thess. ii. 13 Jas. i. 23—25.  
<sup>2</sup> Ch. xvi. 21. Mark x. 32—34. Luke xviii. 31—34.

not be so long in the vineyard ; their race may be sooner run ; but I have chosen to honour them in this manner ; and I have a right to do it. I injure no one ; and have a right to do what I will with mine own. Thus explained, this parable has no reference to the call of the Gentiles ; nor to the call of aged sinners ; nor to the call of sinners at all. It is simply designed to teach that in the church, among the multitudes that shall be saved, Christ makes a difference. He makes some more useful than others, without regard to the time which they serve ; and he will reward them accordingly. The parable teaches one truth, and but one. And where Jesus has explained a parable, we have no right to add to it, and say that it teaches anything else. It adds to the reason for this interpretation, that Christ was conversing about the rewards that should be given to his followers, and not about the numbers that should be called, or about the doctrine of election. See ch. xix. 27—29.

17—19. See also Mark x. 32—34 ; Luke xviii. 31—34. *And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem.* That is, doubtless, to the passover. This journey was from Galilee, on the east side of Jordan, probably to avoid the Samaritans. Ch. xix. 1. At this time he was on this journey to Jerusalem, probably not far from Jericho. This was his last journey to Jerusalem. He was going up to die for the sins of the world. ¶ *Took the twelve disciples apart.* All the males of the Jews were required to be at this feast. Exod. xxiii. 17. The roads, therefore, on such occasions, would probably be thronged. It is probable, also, that they would travel in companies, or that whole neighbourhoods would go together. See Luke ii. 44. By his taking them apart, is meant his taking them *aside from the company.* He had something to communicate, which he did not

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem ; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And <sup>3</sup> shall deliver him to

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvii. 2. Mark xv. 1, 16. Luke xxiii. 1. John xviii. 28—32. Acts iii. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 3—7.

wish the others to hear. Mark adds : “ And Jesus went before them, and they were amazed ; and as they followed, they were sore afraid.” He led the way. He had told them before, ch. xvii. 22, that he should be betrayed into the hands of men, and be put to death. They began now to be afraid that this would happen, and to be solicitous for his life and for their own safety.

18, 19. *Behold we go up to Jerusalem.* Jesus assured them that what they feared would come to pass. But he had in some measure prepared their minds for this state of suffering, by the promises which he had made to them. Ch. xix. 27—30 ; xx. 1—16. In all their sufferings they might be assured that eternal rewards were before them. ¶ *Shall be betrayed.* See ch. xvii. 22. ¶ *Chief Priests and Scribes.* The high priest, and the learned men who composed the Sanhedrim, or great council of the nation. He was thus betrayed by Judas. Ch. xxvi. 15. He was delivered to the chief priests and Scribes. Ch. xxvi. 57. ¶ *And they shall condemn him to death.* They had not power to inflict death, as that was taken away by the Romans. But they had the power of expressing an opinion, and of delivering him to the Romans to be put to death. This they did. Ch. xxvi. 66 ; xxvii. 2. ¶ *Shall deliver him to the Gentiles.* That is, because they have not the right of inflicting capital punishment, they will deliver him to those who have—the Roman authority. *The Gentiles* here mean Pontius Pilate, and the Roman soldiers. See ch. xxvii. 2, 27—30. ¶ *To mock.* See Note, ch. ii. 16. ¶ *To scourge.* That is, to whip. This was done with thongs, or a whip made on purpose ; and this punishment was commonly inflicted upon criminals before crucifixion. See Note on ch. x. 17. ¶ *To crucify him.* That is, to put him to death on a cross,

Gentiles to mock, and to urge,<sup>1</sup> and to crucify him: and third day he shall rise again.

¶ Then<sup>2</sup> came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, desiring a certain thing of him.

¶ And he said unto her, What thou? She saith unto him, That these my two sons may

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 5.    <sup>2</sup> Mark x. 35.

common punishment of slaves. See xxvii. 35. ¶ *The third day*, &c. For evidence that this was fulfilled, see xxviii. Mark and Luke say that he was spit upon. Spitting on another always been considered an expression of the deepest contempt. Luke says, ch. i. 31: "All things that are written by prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished." Among other things, he says he shall be "spitefully hated;" that is, treated with spite or ill-will; malice, implying contempt. These things of our Saviour, and his treatment, and his death, had been predicted in many places. See Isa. liii. Dan. ix. 27.

0—28. See also Mark x. 35—45.

0. *Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children*, &c. This was probably Salome. Mark xv. 40; xvi. 1. *With her sons*. The names of these were James and John. Mark x. 35. Mark says they came and made the request. That is, they made it through the medium of their mother; they requested her to ask it for them. It is not probable that she was an ambitious woman, and was desirous to see her sons exalted. ¶ *Worshipping him*. Show him respect; respectfully saluting him. the original, kneeling. See Note, ch. i. 2.

11. *Grant that my two sons may sit*, &c. They were still looking for a temporal kingdom. They expected that he would reign on the earth with great pomp and glory. They expected that he would appear as a prince and a warrior. They expected to be distinguished in the day of triumph. *To sit on the right and left*

of him, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23. And he saith unto them, Ye

<sup>1</sup> Jas. iv. 3.    <sup>2</sup> Luke xii. 50.

hand of a prince was a token of confidence, and the highest honour granted to his friends. 1 Sam. xx. 25. 1 Kin. ii. 19. Psa. cx. 1. The disciples here had no reference to the kingdom of heaven, but only to the kingdom which they supposed he was about to set up on the earth.

22. *Ye know not what ye ask*. You do not know the nature of your request, nor what would be involved in it. You suppose that it would be attended only with honour and happiness if the request was granted; whereas, it would require much suffering and trial. ¶ *Are ye able to drink of the cup*, &c. To drink of a cup often, in the scriptures, signifies to be afflicted, or sometimes to be punished. Psa. lxxv. 8. Isa. li. 17, 22. The figure is taken from a feast, where the master of a feast extends a cup to those present. Thus God is represented as extending to his Son a cup filled with a bitter mixture—one causing deep sufferings. John xviii. 11. This was the cup to which he referred. ¶ *The baptism that I am baptized with*. This is evidently a phrase denoting the same thing. Are ye able to suffer with me—to endure the trials and pains which shall come upon you and me in endeavouring to build up my kingdom? Are you able to be plunged deep in afflictions, to have sorrows cover you like water, and to be sunk beneath calamities as floods, in the work of religion? Afflictions are often expressed by being sunk in the floods, and plunged in the deep waters. Psa. lxxix. 2; cxxiv. 4, 5. Isa. xliii. 2. Lam. iii. 54.

23. *Ye shall indeed drink of the cup*, &c. You are truly attached to me.

<sup>1</sup> shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.*

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xii. 2. <sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 17. <sup>3</sup> Cor. i. 7. Rev. i. 9.

You will follow me, and you will partake of my afflictions, and will suffer as I shall. This was fulfilled. James was slain with the sword by Herod. Acts xii. 2. John lived many years. But he attended the Saviour through his sufferings, and was himself banished to Patmos, a solitary island, for the testimony of Jesus Christ—a companion of others in tribulation. Rev. i. 9. ¶ *It is not mine to give, &c.* The translation of this place evidently does not express the sense of the original. The translation expresses the idea that Jesus has nothing to do in bestowing rewards on his followers. This is at variance with the uniform testimony of the scriptures, Matt. xxv. 31—40. John v. 22—30. The correct translation of the passage would be, 'To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, except to those for whom it is prepared of my Father.' The passage thus declares that Christ would give rewards to his followers but only to such as should be entitled to them according to the purpose of his Father. Much as he might be attached to these two disciples, yet he could not bestow any such signal favours on them out of the regular course of rewards. Rewards were prepared for his followers, and in due time they should be bestowed. He would bestow them according as they had been provided from eternity by God the Father. Matt. xxv. 34. The correct sense is seen by leaving out that part of the verse which is in italics, and this is one of the places in the Bible where the sense has been obscured or perverted by the introduction of words which have nothing to correspond with them in the original. See a similar instance in 1 John ii. 23.

24. *The ten heard it.* That is the ten other apostles. ¶ *They were moved with*

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye <sup>2</sup> know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be <sup>3</sup> so among you: but <sup>4</sup> whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxii. 25, 26. <sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. v. 3. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xxiii. 11. Mark ix. 35; x. 43.

indignation. They were offended at the ambition and desire of the two to be exalted above their brethren. The word *it* refers not to what Jesus said, but to the request. When the ten heard the request which they had made, they were indignant.

25—27. *But Jesus called them unto him.* That is, he called all the apostles to him, and stated the principles on which they were to act. The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them; that is, over their subjects. 'You know that such honours are customary among nations. The kings of the earth raise their favourites to posts of trust and power. They give authority to some over others. But my kingdom is established in a different manner. There are to be no ranks, no places of dominion. All are to be on a level. The rich, the poor, the learned, the unlearned, the bond, the free, are to be equal. He will be the most distinguished that shows most humility, the deepest sense of his unworthiness, and the most earnest desire to promote the welfare of his brethren.' ¶ *Gentiles.* All who were not Jews, used here to denote the manner in which human governments are constituted. ¶ *Minister.* A servant. The original word is *descon*, a word meaning a servant of any kind, one especially who served at the table; and in the New Testament, one who serves the church. Acts vi. 1—4. 1 Tim. iii. 8. Preachers of the gospel are called ministers, because they are the servants of God and the church, 1 Cor. iii. 5; iv. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 6; vi. 4. Eph. iv. 12: an office, therefore, the very opposite of a station of superiority, which demands the very lowest degree of humility, and forbids a lording it over God's heritage.

ag you, let him be your ser-

Even as the Son of man came to be ministered unto, but <sup>1</sup> to the xxii. 27. John xiii. 4, 14. Phil.

minister, and <sup>2</sup> to give his life a ransom for many.

29 ¶ And as they departed from

<sup>3</sup> Isa. liii. 5, 8, 11. Dan. ix. 24, 26. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. ix. 28. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Rev. i. 5.

*Even as the Son of man, &c.* See ch. viii. 20. Jesus points them to an example. He was in the form of a man in heaven. Phil. ii. 6. He came to man in the form of a servant. Phil. ii. 7. He came not with pomp and glory, but in humble life. And since he had not required them to minister to him. He laboured for them. He did to do them good. He provided for their wants, fared as poorly as they went before them in dangers and trials, practised self-denial on their account, and for them was about to lay down his life. See John xiii. 4, 5. ¶ *To give his life a ransom for many.* The ransom means literally a price paid for the redemption of captives. In war, prisoners are taken by an enemy, money demanded for their release is a ransom. That is, it is the means by which they are set at liberty. So any thing that releases any one from a state of punishment, or suffering, or sin, is a ransom. Men are by nature slaves to sin. They are sold under it. They are under condemnation. Rom. vii. 14, 15. Eph. ii. 3. 1 John v. 19. They are under a curse. Gal. iii. 10. They are in love with sin. They are under its ruling dominion, and are exposed to eternal death. Psa. ix. 17; xi. 6; lxviii. 2; x. 19. Ezek. xviii. 4. Matt. xxv. 46. ii. 6—9. They must have perished, if there had been some way by which they could be rescued. There was such a way by the death of Jesus; by giving his life

he holy, would be only to do his duty, and would make no amends for the past. Repentance and future obedience would not blot away one sin. 4. No man was pure, and no angel could make atonement. God was pleased, therefore, to appoint his only-begotten Son to make such a ransom. See Isa. liii. John i. 29; iii. 16. Eph. v. 2. Heb. vii. 27. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. 1 John iv. 10. Rev. xiii. 8. This is commonly called the atonement. See Notes on Rom. v. 11. ¶ *For many.* See also Matt. xxvi. 28. John x. 15. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Heb. ii. 9. 1 John ii. 2.

29—34. See Mark x. 46—52. Luke xviii. 35—43; xix. 1, where this account of his restoring to sight two blind men is also recorded. ¶ *And as they departed from Jericho.* This was a large town about eight miles west of the Jordan, and about nineteen miles north-east from Jerusalem. Near to this city the Israelites crossed the Jordan, when they entered into the land of Canaan. Josh. iii. 16. It was the first city taken by Joshua, who destroyed it to the foundation, and pronounced a curse on him who should rebuild it. Josh. vi. 20, 21, 26. This curse was literally fulfilled in the days of Ahab, nearly five hundred years after. 1 Kin. xvi. 34. It afterwards became the place of the school of the prophets. 2 Kin. ii. 5. In this place Elisha worked a signal miracle, greatly to the advantage of the inhabitants, by rendering the waters near it, that were

Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

30 ¶ And, <sup>1</sup> behold, two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 27. Mark x. 46. Luke xviii. 35.

of the ancient city, or, as some think, three or four miles east of it, which a modern traveller describes as a poor, dirty village of the Arabs. There are perhaps fifty houses, of rough stone, with roofs of bushes and mud, and the population two hundred or three hundred in number, is entirely Mohammedan. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho lies through what is called the wilderness of Jericho, and is described by modern travellers as the most dangerous and forbidding about Palestine. As lately as 1820, an English traveller, Sir Frederick Henniker, was attacked on this road by the Arabs, with fire-arms, who left him naked and severely wounded. See Notes on Luke x. 30. Jesus was going to Jerusalem. He had left Samaria, and crossed the Jordan. Ch. xix. 1. His regular journey was therefore through Jericho. ¶ *As they departed from Jericho.* Luke says, "As he was come nigh unto Jericho." The original word used in Luke, translated *was come nigh*, commonly expresses approach to a place. But it does not of necessity mean that always. It may denote nearness to a place, whether going to it, or from it. It would be here rendered correctly, when they were near to Jericho, or when they were in the vicinity of it, without saying whether they were going to it or from it. Matthew and Mark say they were going from it. The passage in Luke xix. 1, "And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho," which seems to be mentioned as having taken place *after* the cure of the blind man, does not necessarily suppose that. That passage might be intended to be connected with the account of Zaccheus, and not to denote the order of time in which these events took place; but simply that as he was passing through Jericho, Zaccheus sought to see him, and invited him to his house. Historians vary in the circumstances and order of events. The main facts of the narrative are observed. And such variations of circumstances and order, where there is no palpable contradiction, show the honesty of

out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, <sup>2</sup> thou Son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xii. 23; xv. 22. Acts ii. 30.

the writers; that they did not conspire together to deceive, and are in all courts of justice considered as confirmations of the truth of the testimony.

30. *Two blind men.* Mark and Luke mention but one. They do not say, however, that there was no more than one. They mention one because he was probably well known, perhaps the son of a distinguished citizen reduced to poverty. His name was Bartimeus. *Bar* is a Syriac word, meaning son; and the name means, therefore, "the son of Timeus." Probably Timeus was a man of note, and, as the case of his son attracted most attention, Mark and Luke recorded it particularly. Had they said there was only one healed, there would have been a contradiction. As it is, there is no more contradiction or difficulty than there is in the fact that the evangelists, like all other historians, often omit many facts which they do not choose to record. ¶ *Heard that Jesus passed by.* They learned who he was by inquiring. They heard a noise, and asked who it was. Luke. They had doubtless heard much of his fame, but had never before been where he was, and probably would not be again. They were, therefore, more earnest in calling upon him. ¶ *Son of David.* That is, Messiah, or Christ. This was the name by which the Messiah was commonly known. He was the illustrious descendant of David in whom the promises especially centred. Psa. lxxxix. 3, 4; cxxxii. 11, 12. It was the universal opinion of the Jews that the Messiah was to be the descendant of David. See ch. xxii. 42. On the use of the word *Son*, see Note on Matt. i. 1.

31. *And the multitude rebuked them because, &c.* They chid or reproved them, and in a threatening manner told them to be silent. ¶ *They cried the more.* Jesus standing still, ordered them to be brought to him. (Mark). They then addressed the blind men, and told them that Jesus called. Mark adds, that Bartimeus cast away his garment, and rose and came

more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will e that I shall do unto you ?

Jesus. The garment was not his only sment, but was the outer garment, worn loosely over him, and commonly id aside when persons laboured or ran. ee Note, ch. v. 40. His doing it denoted ate and earnestness, in order to come to eme.

34. And touched their eyes. Mark ad Luke say he added, "thy faith hath ved thee." Thy confidence, or belief hat I could cure, has been the means of btaining this blessing. Faith had no ower to open the eyes, but it led them o Jesus ; it showed that they had just iews of his power ; it was connected with e cure. So faith has no power to save rom sin, but it leads the poor, lost, blind inner to him who has power ; and in this case it is said we are saved by faith. Is touching their eyes was merely a sign hat the power of healing proceeded from im.

Here was an undoubted miracle. 1. These blind men were well known. One t least had been long blind. 2. They ere strangers to Jesus. They could not ave, therefore, feigned themselves blind. 3. The miracle was in the presence of multitudes, who took a deep interest in it, nd who could easily have detected the mposition if there had been one. 4. The en followed him. They praised, or orified God ; (Mark and Luke). The eople gave praise to God also ; (Luke). hey were all satisfied that a real miracle as performed.

#### REMARKS.

I. From the parable at the beginning f this chapter, ver. 1—16, we learn that t is not so much the time that we serve Christ, as the manner, that is to entitle s to high rewards in heaven. Some may e in the church many years, yet accomplish little. Others in a few years ay be more distinguished in the success f their labours and in their rewards.

2. God will do justice to all. Ver. 13. He will give to all his followers all that e promised to give. He will give to him hat is entitled to the least every thing

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion<sup>1</sup> on them, and touched their eyes :

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 36. Psa. cxlv. 8. Heb. ii. 17 ; iv. 15, 16.

which he has promised, and infinitely more than he has deserved.

III. On some he will bestow higher rewards than on others. Ver. 16. There is no reason to think that the condition of men in heaven will be equal, any more than it is on earth. Difference of rank may run through all God's government, and still no one be degraded, or be deprived of his rights.

IV. God does as he pleases with his own. Ver. 15. It is his right to do so—a right which men claim, and which God may claim. If he does injustice to no one, he has a right to bestow what favours on others he pleases.

V. In doing good to another man, he does no injury to me. He violated none of my rights by bestowing great talents on Newton, or great wealth on Solomon. He did not injure me by making Paul a man of distinguished talents and piety, or John a man of much meekness and love. What he gives me I should be thankful for, and improve : nor should I be envious or malignant, that he has given to others more than he has to me. Nay, I should rejoice that he has bestowed such favours on deserving men at all ; that the race is in possession of such talents and rewards, to whomsoever given ; and should believe that in the hands of God, such favours will be well bestowed. God is a Sovereign ; and the Judge of all the earth will do that which is right.

VI. It is our duty to go into the vineyard and labour faithfully, whenever the Lord Jesus calls us, and till he calls us to receive our reward. Ver. 1—16. He has a right to call us, and there are none who are not invited to labour for him.

VII. Rewards are offered to all who will serve him. Ver. 4. It is not that we deserve any favour, or that we shall not say at the end of life that we have been unprofitable servants ; but he graciously promises that our rewards shall be measured by our faithfulness in his cause. He will have the glory of bringing us into his kingdom and saving us, while he will

and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

bestow rewards on us according as we have been faithful in his service.

VIII. Men may be saved in old age. Ver. 6. Old men are sometimes brought into the kingdom of Christ, and made holy. But it is rare. Few aged men are converted. They drop into the grave as they lived. And to a man who wastes his youth and his middle life in sin, and goes down into the vale of years a rebel against God, there is a dreadful probability that he will die as he lived. It will be found to be true, probably, that by far more than half who are saved are converted before they reach the age of twenty-five. Besides, it is foolish as well as wicked to spend the best of our days in the service of Satan, and to give to God only the poor remnant of our lives, that we can no longer use in the cause of wickedness. God should have our first and best days.

IX. Neither this parable, nor any part of the Bible, should be abused, so as to lead us to put off the time of repentance to old age. It is possible, though not probable, that an old man may repent; but it is not probable that we shall live to be old. Few, few of all the world, live to old age. We may die in youth. Thousands die in childhood. The time, the accepted time to serve God, is in childhood. There are more reasons why a child should love the Saviour, than why he should love a parent. He has done much more for us than any parent. And there is no reason why a child may not be trained up to love him, as well as parents. And God will require it at the hands of parents and teachers, if they do not train up the children committed to them to love and obey him.

X. One reason why we do not understand the plain doctrines of the Bible is our prejudice. Ver. 17—19. Our Saviour plainly told his disciples that he must die. He stated the manner of his death, and the principal circumstances. To us all this is plain; but they did not understand it. (Luke). They had filled their heads with notions about his earthly glory and honour, and they were not willing to see the truth as he stated it. Never was there a juster proverb than that, "None are so blind as those who will not see." So to

us the Bible might be plain enough. The doctrines of truth are revealed clear as a sunbeam, but we are filled with previous notions; we are determined to think differently; and the easiest way to gratify this is to say we do not see it so. The only correct principle of interpretation is, that the Bible is to be taken just as it is. The meaning that the sacred writers intended to teach is to be sought honestly; and when found, that and that only is religious truth.

XI. Mothers should be cautious about seeking places of honour for their sons. Ver. 20—22. Doing this, they seldom know what they ask. They may be seeking the ruin of their children. It is not posts of honour that will secure happiness or salvation. Contentment and peace are found oftener in the humble vale of honest and sober industry, in attempting to fill up our days with usefulness in the situation where God has placed us. As the purest and loveliest streams often flow in the retired grove, far from the thundering cataract or the stormy ocean, so is the sweet peace of the soul; it dwells oftener far from the bustle of public life, and the storms and tempests of ambition.

XII. Ambition in the church is exceedingly improper. Ver. 22. It is not the nature of religion to produce it. It is opposed to all the modest, retiring, and pure virtues that Christianity produces. An ambitious man will be destitute of religion just in proportion to his ambition; and piety may always be graduated by humility.

XIII. Our humility is the measure of our religion. Ver. 26—28. Without humility we can have no religion. He that has the most lowly views of himself, and the highest of God, that is willing to stoop the lowest to aid his fellow creatures, and to honour God, has the most genuine piety. Such was the example of our Saviour, and it can never be any dishonour to imitate the Son of God.

XIV. The case of the blind man is an expressive representation of the condition of the sinner. Ver. 30—34. 1. Men are blinded by reason of sin. They do not by nature see the truth of religion. 2. It is proper in this state of blindness

## CHAPTER XXI.

*rides into Jerusalem, 1—11. Drives the traders out of the temple, 12—16. The fig-trees cursed, 17—22. The priests and elders silenced and rebuked parables of the two sons, and the pious husbandmen, 23—46.*

ll upon Jesus to open our eyes. If ever see, it will be by the grace of God. He is the fountain of light, and in darkness should seek him. 3. Past opportunities should be improved. This was the first time that Jesus had been in Jericho. It was the last time he would be there. He was passing through his way to Jerusalem. So he passes us by his ordinances. So it may be the last time that we shall have an opportunity to call upon him. While he is near, we should seek him. 4. When he rebuke us and laugh at us, it should not deter us from calling on the Lord. There is danger that they will shut us out of our purpose to seek him, we should cry the more earnestly to him.

We should feel that our eternal all depends on our being heard. 5. The piercing cry of those who seek the Saviour will not be in vain. They who cry in sensible of their blindness, and believe that he only can open their eyes, will be heard. He turns none away who cry to him. 6. Sinners must "rise" and come to Jesus. They must cast away anything that hinders their coming. The blind Bartimeus threw off his garments," so sinners should throw away anything that hinders their going to every thing that obstructs their progress, and cast themselves at his feet. No will be saved while sitting still. The command is, "strive to enter in;" and promise is made to those only who "seek," and "knock." 7. Prayer is the only channel through which all shall receive mercy. According to faith—that is, our confidence in Jesus and trust and reliance on him—so will it be to us. Without that we shall perish. They who apply to Jesus thus will be sight. Their eyes will be opened, they will see clearly. 9. They who thus restored to sight should follow him. They should follow him where he leads; they should follow him as he leads; they should follow none else but

AND<sup>1</sup> when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

<sup>1</sup> Mark xi. 1. Luke xix. 29.

him. He that can give sight to the blind cannot lead us astray. He that can shed light in the beginning of our faith, can enlighten our goings through all our pilgrimage, and down through the dark valley of the shadow of death.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1—16. See also Mark xi. 1—11, Luke xix. 29—24.

1. *And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem.* They were going up now from Jericho. Chap. xx. 29. The distance was about nineteen miles. The most of the way was a desert, or filled with caves, and rocks, and woods—a fit place for robbers. See Luke x. 30. The Mount of Olives, or Olivet, is on the east of Jerusalem. Between this and Jerusalem there runs a small stream called the brook Kidron, or Cedron. It is dry in the hot seasons of the year, but swells to a considerable size in time of heavy rains. See Note on John xviii. 1. The Mount of Olives was so called from its producing in abundance the olive. It was from Jerusalem about a sabbath day's journey. Acts i. 12. On the west side of the mountain was the garden of Gethsemane. Mark xiv. 32. Luke xxii. 39. On the eastern declivity of the mountain were the villages of Bethphage and Bethany. Mark and Luke say that he came near to both those places. He came nearest to Bethphage, and sent his disciples to the village over against them, to Bethany. Bethany was the place where Lazarus dwelt whom he raised from the dead, John xi.; where Martha and Mary dwelt; and where Mary anointed him with ointment against the day of his burying. John xii. 1—7. These circumstances are omitted by the three first evangelists, but supplied by John, who wrote after them. The Mount of Olives is about a mile in length, and about seven hundred feet in height, and overlooks Jerusalem; so that from its summit almost every part of the city can



2 Saying unto them, <sup>1</sup> Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.

3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; <sup>2</sup> and straightway he will send them.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxvi. 18. John ii. 5-8. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxiv. 1; i. 10, 11. <sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 9.

be seen. The mountain is composed of three peaks or summits. Our Saviour is supposed to have ascended from the middle one. The olive is a fruit well known among us as an article of commerce. The tree blooms in June, and bears white flowers. The fruit is small. It is first green, then pale, and, when fully ripe, black. It encloses a hard stone, in which are the seeds. The wild olive was common, and differed from the other one only in being of a smaller size. There are two roads from Jerusalem to Bethany; one around the southern end of the Mount of Olives, and the other across the summit. The latter is considerably shorter, but more difficult, and it was probably along this road that the Saviour went.

2. Go into the village over against you. The village here meant was not far from Bethphage, and about two miles east of Jerusalem. (Mark and Luke). He had lodged at Bethphage the night before, and in the morning sent his disciples to the village over against them; that is, to Bethany. John xii. 1-12. ¶ *Ye shall find an ass tied, &c.* In Judea there were few horses, and those were chiefly used in war. Men seldom employed them in common life, and in ordinary journeys. The ass, the mule, and the camel, are still most used in eastern countries. To ride on a horse was sometimes an emblem of war: on a mule and an ass the emblem of peace. Kings and princes commonly rode on them in times of peace; and it is mentioned as a mark of rank and dignity to ride in that manner. Judg. x. 4; xii. 14. 1 Sam. xxv. 20. So Solomon, when he was inaugurated as king, rode on a mule. 1 Kin. i. 33. Riding in this manner, *that*, denoted neither poverty nor degra-

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, <sup>3</sup> saying,

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, <sup>4</sup> Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

<sup>3</sup> Zech. ix. 9. <sup>4</sup> Isa. lxi. 11. Mark xi. 4-11. John xii. 15.

dation, but was the appropriate way in which a king should ride, and in which, therefore, the King of Zion should enter into his capital, the city of Jerusalem.

Mark and Luke say that he told them they should find "a colt tied." This they were directed to bring. They mention only the colt, because it was this on which Jesus rode.

3. The Lord hath need of him. This means no more than the master has need of him. The word *Lord* often means no more than master as opposed to servant. Matt. x. 24. Eph. vi. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 5, 6. The word is sometimes used in the Bible as applied to God, or as a translation of the name JEHOVAH. Its common use is a mere title of respect given by an inferior to a superior, by a servant to a master, by a disciple to a teacher. As a title of high respect it was given to Christ, or the Messiah. The persons to whom these disciples were sent were probably acquainted with the miracles of Jesus, and favourably disposed towards him. He had attracted great notice in that region, particularly by raising Lazarus from the dead, and most of the people regarded him as the Messiah.

4, 5. All this was done, &c. The prophecy here quoted is found in Zech. ix. 9. It was always, by the Jews, applied to the Messiah. ¶ *Daughter of Zion.* That is, Jerusalem. Zion was one of the hills on which the city of Jerusalem was built. On this stood the city of David and some strong fortresses. The names daughter and virgin were often given to cities, in accordance with the oriental figurative manner of expression. See Note, Isa. i. 8. See also Psa. xlv. 13; cxxxvii. 8. Isa. xlvii. 1. Amos v. 2. It was used as an expression of their beauty or comeliness. ¶ *Meek.* See Note, ch. v. 5. The

7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way ;

expression here rather denotes peaceful, or warlike ; not with pomp, and state, and the ensigns of ambition. He came in the manner in which kings are accustomed to ride, but with none of their pride and ambitious feeling. ¶ *Sitting upon an ass, &c.* He rode on the colt. (Mark and Luke). This expression in Matthew is one which is common with all writers.

7. And put on them their clothes. This was done as a token of respect. Kin. ix. 13.

8. And a very great multitude, &c. Others showed the same respect by throwing their garments before him ; others by cutting down branches of trees and casting them in the way. This was the way in which conquerors and princes were often honoured. To cast flowers, or garlands, or evergreens, before a warrior returning from victory, or a king entering into his kingdom, was a common way of testifying joyful and triumphant feeling. Thus Josephus says that Alexander and Agrippa were received at Jerusalem. So a modern times some of the most acceptable tokens of rejoicing ever bestowed upon Washington were garlands of roses scattered in his path by children. So the path of Lafayette was often strewn with flowers, as a mark of respect and of a nation's gratitude. John says, ch. xxii. 13, that these branches were branches of the palm-tree. The palm was an emblem of joy and victory. It was used by the Roman soldiers as well as the Jews as a symbol of peace. See Rev. vii. 9.

The palm tree is common in warm climates, and was abundant in Palestine. The finest grew about Jericho and Engaddi. Hence Jericho was called the city of palm-trees. The palm has a long and straight body, a spreading top, and an appearance of very great beauty. It produces an agreeable fruit, a pleasant shade, a kind of honey little inferior to the honey of bees, and from it was drawn a pleasant wine, much used in the east. On ancient coins the palm-tree is often a symbol of Judea. On coins made after

others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, say-

Jerusalem was taken, Judea is represented by a female sitting and weeping under a palm-tree. A reference to the palm-tree occurs often in the Bible, and its general form and uses are familiar to most readers.

Strictly speaking, the palm has no branches ; but at the summit, from forty to eighty twigs, or leaf-stalks, spring forth, which are intended in Neh. viii. 15. The leaves are set around the trunk in circles of about six. The lower row is of great length, and the vast leaves bend themselves in a curve towards the earth ; as the circles ascend, the leaves are shorter. In the month of February, there sprout from between the junctures of the lower stalks and the trunk little scales, which develop a kind of bud, the germ of the coming fruit. These germs are contained in a thick and tough skin, not unlike leather. According to the account of a modern traveller, a single tree in Barbary and Egypt bears from fifteen to twenty large clusters of dates, weighing from fifteen to twenty pounds each. The palm-tree lives more than two hundred years, and is most productive from the thirtieth until the eightieth year. The Arabs speak of two hundred and sixty uses to which the different parts of the palm-tree are applied.

The inhabitants of Egypt, Arabia, and Persia depend much on the fruit of the palm-tree for their subsistence. Camels feed on the seed, and the leaves, branches, fibres, and sap are all very valuable.

The branches referred to by John, ch. xii. 13, were the long leaves which shoot out from the top of the tree, and which were often carried about as the symbol of victory. Compare Notes on Isa. iii. 26.

9. *Hosanna to the Son of David, &c.* The word *hosanna* means "save now," or, "save, I beseech thee." It is a Syriac word, and was the form of acclamation used among the Jews. It was probably used in the celebration of their great festivals. During those festivals they sang Psalms cxv., cxvi., cxvii., and cxviii. In the chanting or singing of those psalms, the

ing, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed <sup>1</sup> is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. <sup>2</sup>

10 And when he was come into

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxiii. 39. Psa. cxviii. 26. <sup>2</sup> Luke ii. 14.

jewish writers inform us, that the people responded frequently hallelujah or hosanna. Their use of it on this occasion was a joyful acclamation, and an invocation of a divine blessing by the Messiah. ¶ *Son of David. The Messiah.* ¶ *Blessed be he, &c.* That is, blessed be the Messiah. This passage is taken from Psa. cxviii. 25, 26. To come in the name of the Lord, is to come by the authority of the Lord, to come commissioned by him to reveal his will. The Jews had commonly applied this to the Messiah. ¶ *Hosanna in the highest.* This may mean either 'Hosanna in the highest, loftiest strains,' or it may mean a prayer to God, 'Save now, O thou that dwellest in the highest heaven, or among the highest angels.' Perhaps the whole song of hosanna may be a prayer to the supreme God, as well as a note of triumphant acclamation: 'Save, now, O thou supremely great and glorious God, save by the Messiah that comes in thy name.'

Mark adds that they shouted, "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord." That is, the kingdom promised to David. 1 Kin. ii. 4; viii. 25. Coming in the name of the Lord means coming according to the promise of the Lord. Its meaning may be thus expressed: 'Prosperity to the reign of our father David, advancing now according to the promise made to him, and about to be established by the long-promised Messiah, his descendant.'

Luke adds, chap. xix. 38, that they said, "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." The word peace is used here as significant of joy, triumph, exultation in heaven at this event. There will be increased peace and rejoicing from the succession of the redeemed: And let glory and praise be given to God among the highest angels.

There is no contradiction here among the evangelists. Among such a multitude the shouts of exultation and triumph would by no means be confined to the

Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 ¶ And <sup>3</sup> Jesus went into the <sup>4</sup> Mark xi. 11. Luke xix. 45, 46. John ii. 15, 16

same words. Some would say one thing, and some another; and one evangelist recorded what was said by a part of the multitude, and another what was said by another part.

10. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved. There was great excitement. The sight of such a multitude, the shouts of the people, and the triumphant procession through the city, excited much attention and inquiry.

12—22. This paragraph contains the account of the barren fig-tree, and of the cleansing of the temple. See also Mark xi. 12—19. Luke xix. 45—48.

12. And Jesus went into the temple of God, &c. From Mark xi. 11—15, it is probable that this cleansing of the temple did not take place on the day that he entered Jerusalem in triumph, but on the day following. He came and looked round upon all things, Mark says, and went out to Bethany with the twelve. On the day following, returning from Bethany, he saw the fig-tree. Entering into the temple, he purified it on that day; or, perhaps he finished the work of purifying it on that day, which he commenced the day before. Matthew has mentioned the purifying of the temple, which was performed probably on two successive days; or has stated the fact, without being particular as to the order of events. Mark has stated them more particularly, and has divided what Matthew mentions together.

The temple of God, or the temple dedicated and devoted to the service of God, was built on mount Moriah. The first temple was built by Solomon, about 1005 years before Christ. 1 Kings vi. He was seven years in building it. 1 Kings vi. 38. David, his father, had contemplated the design of building it, and had prepared many materials for it, but was prevented, because he had been a man of war. 1 Chron. xxii. 1—9. 1 Kin. v. 5. This temple, erected with

temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought

great magnificence, remained till it was destroyed by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, five hundred and eighty-four years before Christ. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, 7, 19.

After the Babylonish captivity, the temple was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, but with vastly inferior and diminished beauty. The aged men wept when they compared it with the glory of the former temple. Ezra iii. 8, 12. This was called the second temple. This temple was often defiled in the wars before the time of Christ. It had become much decayed and impaired. Herod the Great, being exceedingly unpopular among the Jews, on account of his cruelties, see Note, Matt. ii., was desirous of doing something to obtain the favour of the people, and accordingly about sixteen years before Christ, and in the eighteenth year of his reign, he commenced the work of repairing it. This he did, not by taking it down entirely at once, but by removing one part after another till it had become in fact a new temple, greatly surpassing the former in magnificence. It was still called by the Jews the second temple; and by Christ's coming to this temple thus repaired, was fulfilled the prophecy in Hag. ii. 7—9. On this building Herod employed eighteen thousand men, and completed it so as to be fit for use in nine years, or about eight years before Christ. But additions continued to be made to it, and it continued increasing in splendour and magnificence, till A.D. 64. John says, chap. ii. 20, "forty and six years was this temple in building." Christ was then thirty years of age, which added to the sixteen years occupied in repairing it before his birth, make forty-six years.

The name temple was given, not merely to the sacred edifice, or house itself, but to all the numerous chambers, courts, and rooms connected with it, on the top of mount Moriah. The temple itself was a small edifice, and was surrounded by courts and chambers half a mile in circumference. Into this edifice our Saviour never went. The high-priest only went into the holy of holies, and that but once a year; and none but priests were permitted to enter the holy place.

Our Saviour was not of the priest-tribe. He was of the tribe of Judah, and he consequently was allowed to enter no farther than the other Israelites into the temple. The works that he is said to have performed in the temple, therefore, are to be understood as having been performed in the courts surrounding the sacred edifice. These courts will now be described.

The temple was erected on mount Moriah. The space on the summit of the mount was not, however, large enough for the buildings necessary to be erected. It was, therefore, enlarged by building high walls, from the valley below, and filling up the space within. One of these walls was six hundred feet in height. The ascent to the temple was by high flights of steps. The entrance to the temple, or to the courts on the top of the mount, was by nine gates, all of them extremely splendid. On every side they were thickly coated with gold and silver. But there was one gate of peculiar magnificence. This was called the beautiful gate. Acts iii. 2. It was on the east side, and was made of Corinthian brass, one of the most precious metals in ancient times. See the Introduction to 1 Corinthians, § 1. This gate was fifty cubits, or seventy-five feet in height.

The whole temple, with all its courts, was surrounded by a wall about twenty-five feet in height. This was built on the wall raised from the base to the top of the mountain, so that from the top of it to the bottom, in a perpendicular descent, was in some places not far from six hundred feet. This was particularly the case on the south-east corner; and it was here, probably, that Satan wished our Saviour to cast himself down. Note, Matt. iv. 6.

On the inside of this wall, between the gates, were piazzas, or covered porches. On the eastern, northern, and western sides there were two rows of these porches; on the south, three. These porches were covered walks, about twenty feet in width, paved with marble of different colours, with a flat roof of costly cedar, which was supported by pillars of solid marble, so large that three men could scarcely stretch their arms so as to meet around them. These walks or porches

in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers,

afforded a grateful shade and protection to the people in hot or stormy weather. The one on the east side was distinguished for its beauty, and was called Solomon's porch. John x. 23. Acts iii. 11. It stood over the vast terrace or wall which he had raised from the valley beneath, and which was the only part of his work that remained in the sacred temple.

When a person entered any of the gates into this space within the wall, he saw the temple rising before him with great magnificence. But the space was not clear all the way up to it. Going forward, he came to another wall, inclosing considerable ground, considered more holy than the rest of the hill. The space between this first and second wall was called the court of the Gentiles. It was so called because Gentiles might come into it, but they could proceed no farther. On the second wall, and on the gates, were inscriptions in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, forbidding any Gentile or unclean person from proceeding farther on pain of death. This court was not of equal dimensions all the way round the temple. On the east, north, and west, it was quite narrow. On the south it was wide, occupying nearly half of the whole surface of the hill. In this court the Gentiles might come. Here was the place where much secular business was transacted. This was the place occupied by the buyers, and sellers, and the money-changers, and which Jesus purified by casting them out.

The enclosure within the second wall was nearly twice as long from east to west as from north to south. This enclosure was also divided. The eastern part of it was called the court of the women; so called because women might advance thus far, but no farther. This court was square. It was entered by three gates: one on the north, one on the east directly opposite to the beautiful gate, and one on the south. In passing from the court of the Gentiles to that of the women it was necessary to ascend about nine feet by steps. This court of the women was inclosed with a double wall, with a space between the walls about fifteen feet in width, paved with marble. The inner of these two walls was much higher than

the one outside. The court of the women was paved with marble. In the corners of that court were different structures for the various uses of the temple. It was in this court that the Jews commonly worshipped. Here, probably, Peter and John, with others, went up to pray. Acts iii. 1. Here too the Pharisees and publican prayed; the Pharisees near the gate that led forward to the temple; the publican standing far off, on the other side of the court. Luke xviii. 9—14. Paul also was seized here, and charged with defiling the temple, by bringing the Gentiles into that holy place. Acts xxi. 26—30.

A high wall on the west side of the court of the women divided it from the court of the Israelites; so called because all the males of the Jews might advance there. To this court there was an ascent of fifteen steps. These steps were in the form of a half circle. The great gate to which these steps led, was called the gate Nicanor. Besides this, there were three gates on each side, leading from the court of the women to the court of the Israelites.

Within the court of the Israelites, was the court of the priests, separated by a wall about a foot and a half in height. Within that court was the altar of burnt offering, and the laver standing in front of it. Here the priests performed the daily service of the temple. In this place also were accommodations for the priests, when not engaged in conducting the service of the temple; and for the Levites, who conducted the music of the sanctuary.

The temple, properly so called, stood within this court. It surpassed in splendour all the other buildings of the holy city; perhaps in magnificence it was unequalled in the world. It fronted the east, looking down through the gate Nicanor and the beautiful gate, and onward to the mount of Olives. From the mount of Olives on the east there was a beautiful and commanding view of the whole sacred edifice. It was there that our Saviour sat, when the disciples directed his attention to the goodly stones with which the temple was built. Mark xiii. 1. The entrance into the temple

eats of them that sold

13 And said unto them, It is <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lvi. 7.

the court of the priests, of twelve steps. The porch of the temple was a hundred and twenty feet high, and as many broad. The porch was entered, was one hundred feet high, and thirty-seven feet wide. The porch was of this from the mount of Zion as it was, with white marble, and with plates of silver, was dazzling and splendid. Just as the rising of the sun so strong and dazzling attracted the eye of the spectator to turn away. To strangers it appeared like a mountain with snow, for where it was covered with plates of gold, it was bright and glistening.

The temple itself was divided into two parts, called the sanctuary or the holy of holies, or the most holy, was thirty feet each way. In the sanctuary, this contained the ark of the covenant, the tables of the law, and the mercy-seat, and the golden candlestick, the golden altar, and the table of show-bread, and the altar of incense, or the most holy. Into this place no person but the high priest, and he but once a year. These two apartments were separated only by a veil, very costly and wrought. It was this veil that rent from the top to the bottom when the Saviour died. Matt. 27. Around the walls of the temple, so called, was a structure, three stories high, containing the use of the officers of the temple. The temple was wholly destroyed by the Romans and Vespasian, and was rebuilt according to the precept of the Saviour. See Notes on

The site of it was made level. Julian the apostate intended to rebuild it, but the working of his own historian, Ammianus, were prevented by an earthquake from the ground. Eusebius's Divine Legation of

mosque of Omar, one of the most splendid specimens of Saracenic architecture in the world.

12. *And cast out them that bought and sold in the temple.* The place where this was done was not the temple itself, but the outer court, or the court of the Gentiles. This was esteemed the least sacred part of the temple; and the Jews, it seems, did not consider it profanation to appropriate this to any business in any way connected with the temple service. The things which they bought and sold were, at first, those pertaining to the sacrifices. It is not improbable, however, that the traffic afterwards extended to all kinds of merchandise. It gave rise to much confusion, noise, contention, and fraud, and was exceedingly improper in the temple of the Lord. ¶ *The tables of the money-changers.* Judea was subject to the Romans. The money in current use was Roman coin. Yet the Jewish law required that every man should pay a tribute to the service of the sanctuary of half a shekel. Exod. xxx. 11—16. This was a Jewish coin; and it was required to be paid in that coin. It became, therefore, a matter of convenience to have a place where the Roman coin might be exchanged for the Jewish half-shekel. This was the professed business of these men. Of course they would demand a small sum for the exchange; and among so many thousands as came up to the great feasts, it would be a very profitable employment, and one easily giving rise to much fraud and oppression. ¶ *The seats of them that sold doves.* Doves were required to be offered in sacrifice. Lev. xiv. 22. Luke ii. 24. Yet it was difficult to bring them from the distant parts of Judea. It was found much easier to purchase them in Jerusalem. Hence it became a business to keep them to sell to those who were required to offer them.

Mark adds, ch. xi. 16, that he would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. That is, probably, any of the vessels or implements connected with the traffic in oil, incense, wine, &c., that were kept for sale in the temple.

13. *And said—It is written, &c.* This is written in Isa. lvi. 7. The first part of

written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of <sup>1</sup> thieves.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and <sup>2</sup> he healed them.

15 ¶ And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna <sup>3</sup> to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

<sup>1</sup> Jer. vii. 11. <sup>2</sup> Isa. xxxv. 6. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 9; ch. xx. 42. John vii. 42.

this verse only is quoted from Isaiah. The rest, *but ye have made it a den of thieves*, was added by Jesus, denoting their abuse of the temple. Thieves and robbers live in dens and caves. Judea was then much infested with them. In their dens thieves devise and practise iniquity. These buyers and sellers imitated them. They made the temple a place of gain; they cheated and defrauded; they took advantage of the poor, and by their being under a necessity of purchasing these articles for sacrifice they robbed them, by selling what they had at an enormous price.

The following reasons may be given why this company of buyers and sellers obeyed Christ:—1. They were overawed by his authority; and struck with a consciousness that he had a right to command. 2. Their own consciences reproved them; they knew they were guilty, and durst make no resistance. 3. The people generally were then on the side of Jesus, believing him to be the Messiah. 4. It had always been the belief of the Jews that a prophet had a right to change, regulate, and order the various affairs relating to external worship. They supposed Jesus to be such, and they durst not resist him.

Mark and Luke add, that in consequence of this, the Scribes and chief priests attempted to put him to death. Mark xi. 18, 19. Luke xix. 47, 48. This they did from envy. Matt. xxvii. 18. He drew off the people from them, and they envied and hated him. They were restrained then for fear of the people; and this was the reason why they plotted secretly to put him to death, and why

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out <sup>4</sup> of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

17 ¶ And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany, and he lodged there.

18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19 And <sup>5</sup> when he saw <sup>6</sup> a fig

<sup>4</sup> Psa. viii. 2. <sup>5</sup> Mark xi. 13. <sup>6</sup> *One fig tree.*

they afterwards so gladly heard the proposals of the traitor. Matt. xxvi. 14, 18.

15, 16. *When the Chief Priests, &c.* The chief men of the nation were envious of his popularity. They could not prevent it; but being determined to find fault, they took occasion to do so from the shouts of the children. Men often are offended that children have anything to do with religion, and deem it very improper that they should rejoice that the Saviour has come. Our Lord Jesus viewed this subject differently. He saw that it was proper that they should rejoice. They are interested in the concerns of religion; and then, before evil principles get fast hold of their minds, is a proper time to love and obey him. He confounded those who found fault by appealing to a text of their own scriptures. This text is found in Psa. viii. 2. This quotation is not made directly from the Hebrew, but from the Greek translation. This, however, should create no difficulty. The point of the quotation was to prove that children might offer praise to God. This is expressed in both the Hebrew and the Greek.

17. *Bethany.* See Note, Matt. xxi. 1.

19. *And when he saw a fig tree in the way, &c.* This tree was standing in the public road. It was, therefore, common property, and any one might lawfully use its fruit. Mark says, ch. xi. 13, "Seeing a fig-tree near off, having leaves, he came, &c. That is, not far off from the road; but seeing it at a considerable distance, having leaves appearing healthy and luxuriant, they presumed that there would be fruit on it. Mark adds, "he came if he might find any thing thereon." This

ee in the way, he came to it, and und nothing thereon, but leaves ly, and said unto it, Let no nit grow on thee henceforward r ever. And presently the fig e withered <sup>1</sup> away.

<sup>1</sup> Jude 12.

judging from the appearance of the e, it was probable that there would be it on it. We are not to suppose that r Lord was ignorant of the true condition the tree, but he acted according to the pearance of things; being man as well God, he acted of course as men do : in such circumstances. ¶ *And found thing thereon, but leaves only.* Mark es as a reason for this, that "the time figs was not yet." That is, the time of theing the figs was not yet, or had not sed. It was a time when figs were e, or fit to eat, or he would not have as to it, expecting to find them. But e time of gathering them had not passed, d it was to be presumed that they were ll on the tree. This took place in the ek of the passover, or in the beginning April. Figs in Palestine are commonly e at the passover. The summer in destine begins in March, and it is no common thing that figs should be eat- le in April. It is said that fig trees some- nes produce fruit the year round.

Mark says that this took place on the orning of the day on which he purified e temple. Matthew would lead us to ppose that it was on the day following. atthew records briefly what Mark cords more fully. Matthew states the ct that the fig-tree was barren and ithered away, without regarding minutely e order, or the circumstances in which e event took place. There is no con- adiction. For Matthew does not affirm at this took place on the morning after e temple was cleansed, though he places in that order. Nor does he say that a y did not elapse after the fig-tree was ned before the disciples discovered that as withered; though he does not affirm at it was so. Such circumstantial riations, where there is no positive con- adiction, go greatly to confirm the truth f a narrative. They show that the riers were honest men, and did not con- ire to deceive the world. ¶ *And said*

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If <sup>2</sup> ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xvii. 20. Luke xvii. 6. Jas. i. 6.

unto it, *Let no fruit grow on thee, &c.* Mark calls this cursing the tree, ch. xi. 21. The word *curse* does not imply here anger or disappointment, or malice. It means, only devoting to this destruction, or this withering away. All the curse that was pronounced, was in the words that no fruit should grow on it. The Jews used the word *curse*, not as always implying wrath, and anger, but to devote to death, or to any kind of destruction. Heb. vi. 8. It has been commonly thought that Jesus did this to denote the sudden withering away, or destruction of the Jewish people. They, like the fig-tree, promised fair. That was full of leaves, and they full of professions. Yet both were equally barren. And as that was destroyed, so were they soon to be. It is certain that this would be a good illustration of the destruction of the Jewish people; but there is not the least evidence that our Saviour intended it as such; and without such evidence, we have no right to say that that was its meaning. ¶ *And presently the fig-tree withered away.* That is, before another day. See Mark. It is probable that they were passing directly onward, and did not stop then to consider it. Matthew does not affirm that it withered away in their presence, and Mark affirms that they made the discovery on the morning after it was cursed.

20. *And when the disciples saw it.* That is, on the morning following that on which it was cursed. Mark xi. 20. ¶ *They marvelled, saying, &c.* Peter said this. Mark xi. 21. Matthew means only to say that this was said to him; Mark tells us which one of them said it.

21. *Jesus answered and said, &c.* Jesus took occasion from this to establish their faith in God. Mark xi. 22. He told them that any difficulty could be removed by faith. To remove a mountain, denotes the power of overcoming any difficulty. The phrase was so used by the Jews. There is no doubt that this



not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask <sup>1</sup> in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

23 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 7. Mark xi. 24. Jas. v. 16. 1 John iii. 22; v. 14. <sup>2</sup> Mark xi. 27. Luke xx. 1.

was literally true, that if they had the faith of miracles, they could remove the mountain before them—the mount of Olives—for this was as easy for God to do by them as to heal the sick, or raise the dead. But he rather referred, probably, to the difficulties and trials which they would be called to endure in preaching the gospel.

22. *And all things, &c.* He adds an encouragement for them to pray, assuring them that they should have all things which they asked. This promise was evidently a special one, given to them in regard to working miracles. To them it was true. But it is manifest that we have no right to apply this promise to ourselves. It was designed specially for the apostles; nor have we a right to turn it from its original meaning.

23—27. See also Mark xi. 27—33. Luke xx. 1—8.

23. *When he was come into the temple.* That is, probably, into the inner court; the court of the Israelites. They took this opportunity when he was not surrounded by the multitude. ¶ *By what authority, &c.* There was a show of propriety in this question. He was making great changes in the affairs of the temple, and they claimed the right to know why this was done, contrary to their permission. He was not a priest; he had no civil or ecclesiastical authority as a Jew. It was sufficient authority, indeed, that he came as a prophet, and worked miracles. But they *professed* not to be satisfied with that. ¶ *These things.* The things which he had just done, in overturning the seats

said, By <sup>3</sup> what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you a thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves saying, if we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why do ye not then believe him?

<sup>3</sup> Exod. ii. 14.

of those that were engaged in trade Ver. 12.

24, 25. *And Jesus answered, &c.* Jesus was under no obligation to give them an answer. They well knew by what authority he was acting. He had not concealed his power in working miracles, and he had not kept back the knowledge that he was the Messiah. He therefore referred them to a similar case, that of John the Baptist. He knew the estimation in which John was held by the people. He knew the wise in their own craftiness. Whenever answer they gave, he knew it would convict themselves. And so they saw when they looked at the question They reasoned correctly. If they said *from heaven*, he would directly ask why they did not believe him. They professed to hear all the prophets. If they said, *men*, their reputation was gone, for all the people believed that John was a prophet ¶ *The baptism of John.* For an account of this, see Matt. iii. The word *baptism* here probably includes all his work. It was his principal employment; and he was called the Baptist, or the Baptizer. But our Saviour's question refers to his whole ministry, the ministry of John, baptism, preaching, prophecies—were they from God or not? If they were, then the inference was clear that Jesus was the Messiah and then they might easily know by what authority he did those things. ¶ *From heaven.* By divine authority, or by command of God. ¶ *From men.* human authority.

26. *We fear the people.* They feared that the people would stone them. (See

26 But if we shall say, Of men ; we fear the people ; for <sup>1</sup> all hold him as a prophet.

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you what authority I do these things.

28 ¶ But what think ye ? A certain man had two sons ; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not : but afterward <sup>2</sup> he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he an-

Ch. xiv. 5. Mark vi. 20. John v. 35 ; x. 42. <sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13. 1 Cor. vi. 11. & ii. 1—13.

swered and said, I go, sir : and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father ? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not : but the publicans <sup>3</sup> and the harlots <sup>4</sup> believed him : and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not <sup>5</sup> afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 ¶ Hear another parable :

<sup>1</sup> Luke iii. 12. <sup>4</sup> Luke vii. 37—50. <sup>5</sup> Rev. ii. 21.

will not. This had been the language of the publicans and wicked men. They refused at first, and did not profess to be willing to go. ¶ *Repented.* Changed his mind. Afterwards, at the preaching of John and Christ, the publicans, the wicked, repented and obeyed. ¶ *The second said, I go sir : and went not.* This represented the conduct of the Scribes and Pharisees, professing to obey God ; observing the external rites of religion ; but opposed really to the kingdom of God, and about to put his Son to death. ¶ *Whether of them twain, &c.* Which of the two. ¶ *They say unto him, The first.* This answer was correct. But it is strange that they did not perceive that it condemned themselves. ¶ *Go into the kingdom of God.* Become Christians, or more readily follow the Saviour. See Note, Matt. iii. 2. ¶ *Before you.* Rather than you. They are more likely to do it than you. You are self-righteous, self-willed, and obstinate. Many of them had believed, but you have not. ¶ *John came in the way of righteousness.* That is, in the right way, or teaching the way to be righteous ; to wit, by repentance. Publicans and harlots heard him, and became righteous, but they did not. They saw it, but as in a thousand other cases, it did not produce the proper effect on them, and they would not repent.

33—46. *The parable of the vineyard.*

There was a certain householder, which <sup>1</sup> planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country :

84 And when the time of the

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxxv. 8—16. Cant. viii. 11, 12. Isa. v. 1—7. Jer. ii. 21. Mark xii. 1. Luke xx. 9—18.

This is also recorded in Mark xii. 1—12. Luke xx. 9—19.

33. *Hear another parable.* See Note, ch. xiii. 3. ¶ *A certain householder.* Note, ch. xx. 1. ¶ *Planted a vineyard.* A place for the cultivation of grapes. It is often used to represent the church of God as a place cultivated and valuable. Judea was favourable to vines, and the figure is frequently used, therefore, in the sacred writers. It is used here to represent the Jewish people, the people chosen of the Lord, cultivated with care, and signally favoured, or perhaps more definitely, the city of Jerusalem. ¶ *Hedged it round about.* This means, he inclosed it, either with a fence of wood or stone or more probably with thorns, thick-set, and growing, a common way of inclosing fields in Judea, as it is in England. ¶ *And digged a winepress in it.* Mark says, “digged a place for the wine vat.” This should have been so rendered in Matthew. The original word does not mean the press in which the grapes were trodden, but the vat, or large cistern, into which the wine ran. This was commonly made by digging into the side of a hill. The winepress was made of two receptacles. The upper one, in Persia, at present, is about eight feet square, and four feet high. In this the grapes are thrown and trodden by men, and the juice runs into the large receptacle, or cistern below. See Notes on Isa. lxiii. 2, 3. ¶ *And built a tower.* See also Isa. v. 2. In eastern countries at present these towers are often eighty feet high, and thirty feet square. They were for the keepers who defended the vineyard from thieves and animals, especially from foxes. Cant. i. 6; ii. 15. ¶ *And let it out, &c.* This was not an uncommon thing. Vineyards were often planted to be let out for profit. ¶ *Into a far country.* This means, in the original, only that he departed from them. It does not

fruit drew near, he sent his servants <sup>2</sup> to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

85 And <sup>3</sup> the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kin. xvii. 13—22. <sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 19; xiii. 34—47. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. Neh. ix. 26. Jer. xxv. 3—7. Acts vi. 52. 1 Thess. ii. 15. Heb. xi. 36, 37. Rev. vi. 2.

mean that he went out of the land. Luke adds, “for a long time.” That is, as appears, till the time of the fruit, perhaps for a year. This vineyard denotes, doubtless, the Jewish people, or Jerusalem. But these circumstances are not to be particularly explained. They serve to keep up the story. They denote in general that God had taken proper care of his vineyard, i. e. his people: but beyond that we cannot affirm that these circumstances, of building the tower, &c., mean any particular thing, for he has not told us that they do. And where he has not explained, we have no right to attempt it.

34. *And when the time of the fruit drew near, &c.* The time of gathering the fruit. The vineyard was let out, probably for a part of the fruit, and the owner sent to receive the part that was his. ¶ *Sent his servants.* These, doubtless, represent the prophets sent to the Jewish people.

35. *And beat one.* The word here translated *beat*, properly means to *flay*, or to take off the skin. Hence to *beat*, or to whip, so that the skin in many places is taken off. ¶ *And killed another.* Isaiah is said to have been put to death by sawing him asunder. See 1 Sam. xxii. 18. 1 Kin. xix. 10. Luke xiii. 34. Heb. xi. 37. ¶ *And stoned another.* This was a common way of punishment among the Jews. Deut. xiii. 10; xvii. 5. Josh. vii. 25. Especially was this the case in times of popular tumult, and of sudden indignation among the people. John viii. 59; x. 81. Acts vii. 58; xix. 19. This does not imply of necessity that those who were stoned died, but they might be only severely wounded. Mark says, “at him they cast stones and wounded him in the head, and sent him away,” &c.

There is a little variation in the cr-

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, <sup>1</sup> This is the heir; come, let

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ii. 13—16. Heb. i. 1, 2.

circumstances, as mentioned by Matthew, and by Mark and Luke; but the substance is the same. Mark and Luke are more particular, and state the order in which the servants were sent one after another. They all denote the dealing of the people of Israel towards the prophets. All these things had been done to them. See 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21; xxxvi. 16. Neh. ix. 26. Jer. xlv. 4—6. Heb. xi. 37.

37. *Last of all, &c.* Mark adds, that this was an only son, greatly beloved. This beautifully and most tenderly exhibits the love of God in sending his only Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to die for men. Long had he sent the prophets, and they had been persecuted and slain. There was no use in sending any more prophets to the people. They had done all they could do. God had one only-begotten and well-beloved Son, whom he might send into the world, and whom the world ought to reverence, even as they should the Father. John v. 23. To *reverence*, denotes honour, esteem, deference—that feeling which we have in the presence of one greatly our superior; to give such a person, in our feelings and by our deportment, the honour which is due to his rank and character. God is often represented in the Bible as giving his Son—his only-begotten and well-beloved Son—for a lost world. John iii. 16, 17. Rom. viii. 3, 32. Gal. iv. 4. 1 John iv. 3, 14.

38. *But when the husbandmen, &c.* They determined to kill him, and as he was the only son, they supposed they could easily seize on the property. It was rented to them, was in their possession, and they resolved to keep it. This circumstance has probably no reference to any particular conduct of the Jews, but is thrown in to keep up the

us kill him, <sup>2</sup> and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they <sup>3</sup> caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xxvi. 3—5. <sup>3</sup> Acts ii. 23; iv. 25—27.

story, and fill up the narrative. An *heir* is one who succeeds to an estate, commonly a son; an *inheritance* is what an heir receives.

39. *And they caught him, &c.* This refers to the conduct of the Jews in putting the Saviour to death. So they understood it. Ver. 45. The Jews put him to death, after they had persecuted and slain the prophets. This was done by giving him into the hands of the Romans, and seeking his crucifixion. Matt. xxvii. 20—25. Acts ii. 23; vii. 51, 52. ¶ *And cast him out of the vineyard.* The vineyard in this parable may represent Jerusalem. Jesus was crucified out of Jerusalem, on mount Calvary. Luke xxiii. 33.

40. *When the Lord, therefore, &c.* Jesus then asked them a question about the proper way of dealing with those men. The design of asking them this question was that they might condemn themselves, and admit the justice of the punishment that was soon coming upon them.

41. *They say, &c.* They answered according as they knew men would act, and would act justly in doing it. He would take away their privileges and confer them on others. This was the answer which Jesus wished. It was so clear, that they could not answer otherwise. He wished to show them the justice of taking away their national privileges, and punishing them in the destruction of their city and nation. Had he stated this at first, they would not have heard him. He, however, by a parable led them along to state themselves the very truth which he wished to communicate, and they had then nothing to answer. They did not, however, yet see the bearing of what they had admitted.

miserably destroy<sup>1</sup> those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other<sup>2</sup> husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, *The<sup>3</sup> stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the*

<sup>1</sup> Psa. ii. 4, 5, 9. Zech. xii. 2. <sup>2</sup> Luke xxi. 24. Rom. ix. 26; xl. 11. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxviii. 22. Isa. xxviii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7.

42, 43. *Jesus saith, &c.* Jesus, having led them to admit the justice of the great principle on which God was about to act towards them, proceeds to apply it by a text of scripture, declaring that this very thing which they admitted in the case of the husbandmen, had been predicted respecting themselves. This passage is found in Psa. cxviii. 22, 23. It was first applicable to David; but no less to Jesus.

¶ *The stone.* The figure is taken from building a house. The principal stone for size and beauty is that commonly laid as the corner-stone. ¶ *Which the builders rejected.* On account of its want of beauty, or size, it was laid aside, or deemed unfit to be a corner-stone. This represents the Lord Jesus, proposed to the Jews as the foundation, or corner-stone on which to build the church: rejected by them—the builders—on account of his want of comeliness or beauty; i. e., of what they esteemed to be comely or desirable. Isa. liii. 2, 3. ¶ *The same is become, &c.* Though rejected by them, yet God chose him, and made him the foundation of the church. Christ is often compared to a stone, a corner-stone, a tried, i. e., a sure, firm foundation—all in allusion to the custom of building. Acts iv. 11. Rom. ix. 33. Eph. ii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 7. ¶ *Lord's doing.* The appointment of Jesus of Nazareth to be the foundation of the church, is by miracle and prophecy proved to be the work of God. ¶ *Marvellous in our eyes.* Wonderful in the sight of his people. An object of gratitude and admiration. That he should select his only Son; that he should stoop so low, be despised, rejected, and put to death; that God should raise him up, and build a church on this foundation, embracing the Gentile as well

head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you,<sup>4</sup> The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall<sup>5</sup> on this stone shall be broken: but

<sup>4</sup> Ver. 41; ch. viii. 11, 12. Acts xiii. 46, 47. <sup>5</sup> Isa. viii. 14, 15.

as the Jew, and spreading through all the world, is a subject of wonder and praise to all the redeemed.

43. *The kingdom of God, &c.* Jesus applies the parable to them—the Jews. They had been the children of the kingdom, or under the reign of God; having his law, and acknowledging him as King. They had been his chosen and peculiar people. But he says that now this privilege should be taken away, and they cease to be the peculiar people of God; and the blessing should be given to a nation who would bring forth the fruits thereof, or be righteous; that is, to the Gentiles. Acts xxviii. 28.

44. *Whosoever shall fall, &c.* There is an allusion here doubtless, to Isa. viii. 14, 15. Having made an allusion to himself as a stone, or a rock, ver. 42, he proceeds to state the consequences of coming in contact with it. He that falls upon it, shall be broken: he that runs against it—a corner-stone, standing out from the other parts of the foundation—shall be injured, or broken in his limbs, or body. He that is offended with my being the foundation, or that opposes me, shall, by the act, injure himself; make himself miserable by so doing, even were there nothing further. But there is something further. ¶ *On whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* That is, in the original, will reduce him to dust, so that it may be scattered by the winds. There is an allusion here, doubtless, to the custom of stoning as a punishment among the Jews. A scaffold was erected, twice the height of the man to be stoned. Standing on its edge, he was violently struck off by one of the witnesses; if he died by the blow and the fall, nothing farther was done; if not, a heavy stone

whosoever it shall fall, it<sup>1</sup> grind him to powder.

And when the chief priests and scribes had heard his parables, perceived that he spake of them.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii. 2, 3.

rown down on him, which at once him. So the Saviour speaks of the of the stone on his enemies. They oppose him, reject him, and continue intent, shall be crushed by him in ay of judgment, and perish for ever.

46. They at last perceived that he of them, and would have gratified malice at once, but they feared the c.

#### REMARKS.

Jesus is omniscient, and sees and all things. Ver. 2.

It is our duty to obey the Lord, and to do it at once. Ver. 3. n he commands, there should be no . What he orders is right; and we d not hesitate or deliberate about it. f. Especially is this the case where to be honoured, as he was on this ion. Ver. 3, 8. If it was for our st or honour only that we obeyed it would be of less consequence. our obedience will honour him; and ould seek that honour by any sacrifice if denial.

7. We should be willing to give up property to honour the Lord Jesus.

3. He has a right to it. If given read the gospel, it goes as this did, crease "the triumphs of our King," should be willing to give our wealth, he might "gird on his sword," and e prosperously among the heathen." y one saved among the heathen, by ing the gospel to them, will be for honour of Jesus. They will go to his train, when he shall enter nphantly into his kingdom at the day adgment.

It is our duty to honour him. Ver.

9. He is King of Zion. He is Lord

11. He reigns, and shall always reign.

Sinners! whose love can ne'er forget

The wormwood and the gall,  
Gosp'el spread your trophies at his feet,  
And crown him Lord of all.

Ye chosen seed of Israel's race;

Ye ransomed from the fall;

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they<sup>2</sup> took him for a prophet.

<sup>2</sup> Luke vii. 16. John vii. 40.

Hail him who saves you by his grace,  
And crown him Lord of all.

"Let every kindred, every tribe,  
On this terrestrial ball,  
To him all majesty ascribe,  
And crown him Lord of all."

VI. Children should also honour him, and shout hosanna to him. Ver. 15. The chief priests and scribes, in the time of our Saviour, were displeased that they did so; and many of the great, and many formal professors, since, have been displeased that children should profess to love and honour, Jesus. They have opposed Sunday schools, and opposed the praying of children, and opposed their singing to his praise, and opposed their giving their money to spread his gospel. But Jesus loves such praise and such service. The mouths of babes and sucklings should be taught to speak his name; and whatever the world may say, whatever the proud, the rich, or the formal may say, children should seek him early, and give their first years to him. He loves their praises. Perhaps few of all the songs of thanksgiving are so pleasant to his ear, as the hosannas of a sabbath school.

VII. We have here a view of the glory of Jesus. Ver. 9—11. Though humble, yet he was King. Though most of his life unhonoured, yet once he had the honours of his station rendered to him, and entered the city of his father David as a triumphant King of Zion. He will be yet more honoured. He will come with all his saints, with the glory of his Father, and with his holy angels. There we shall be. And then we should be prepared to join with the vast host in shouting hosanna to the returning King of Zion.

VIII. Yet amidst all these honours he was meek and lowly. Ver. 5. Others would have been proud, and lifted up. But he was always meek. His heart was not proud. He is the only one of kings, that could bear triumph and honour

without being lifted up by them, and made proud.

IX. Yet amidst all his triumphs, he wept over Jerusalem. (Luke). No king, no conqueror, ever before showed compassion like this. Men weep when they are afflicted, or are poor and needy, but what prince has ever, in the moment of his triumph, wept over the miseries and dangers of his subjects? Not an instance can be found in all history, where an earthly conqueror ever showed compassion like this. So Jesus has still compassion over blind, ruined, wretched man. Amidst all the triumphs of the gospel, he does not forget those who are yet in their sins, but stretches out his arms to welcome them to his embrace.

X. Prophecy will be certainly and exactly fulfilled. (Luke). That respecting Jerusalem was literally accomplished; and in like manner will all that is predicted of all sinners assuredly come to pass. If Jerusalem had repented, it would have been saved. So if sinners repent, they will be saved. If not, like Jerusalem, in due time they will perish.

XI. Jesus purified the temple. Ver. 12. It was the house of God. So our hearts should be the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit. So also they should be pure. All worldly cares, and traffic, and business, that would interfere with the dwelling of the Spirit there, and all wickedness, oppression, extortion, cheating, and pollution, should be banished. God dwells not in such polluted temples; and unless we are pure in heart, he will not be with us, and we shall not see his face in peace.

XII. Jesus only can purify our hearts. He does it by his blood and Spirit. Over all our sins he holds the same power as he did over the traffickers in the temple. At his command they will flee, and we shall be pure. If our hearts are ever purified, therefore, it will be by the power of Jesus. Nor should we wait in sin for him to do it. We should come to him, and beseech him to have mercy, and to save us from our pollutions.

XIII. Envy and hatred will take hold of very small matters, to show itself against the good, and even the prudent. Ver. 15. They could blame nothing else, and they chose to find fault with the shouting of children. So always in a revival of religion, or any great work of the Lord, it is some small matter that is seized upon;

something not exactly to the view of wicked objectors, that is made the occasion of reproach and opposition.

XIV. We must produce fruit as well as flowers, in our lives. Ver. 19. A profession of religion is like the flowers of spring. A revival is like the opening fragrant blossoms. They are beautiful and promise much fruit. But how many wither, and droop, and soon fall useless to the ground! How few of all the blossoms of the spring produce ripe and mellow fruit in autumn! So, alas! it is often with those who appear well in revivals of religion.

XV. If we make a profession, and do not produce fruit, Jesus will curse us, and we shall soon wither away. Ver. 19, 20. He will suffer none to enter into his kingdom on the ground of profession only. If we bear fruit, and live lives of piety, we are Christians. If not, all our professions are like the blossoms of spring, or the leaves of the tree. They will not save us from the withering frown of Jesus.

XVI. Men will do almost any thing, right or wrong, and as often wrong as right, to obtain popularity. Ver. 24. It is generally not asked by such men what is right or what is true, but what will secure popularity. If they have that, they are satisfied.

XVII. Men often tell a direct falsehood, rather than acknowledge the truth. Ver. 27. Especially is this the case when the truth makes against them.

XVIII. Double-dealing, and an attempt to evade the truth, commonly lead into difficulty. If these men had been honest, they would have had far less trouble. Ver. 27.

XIX. A state of gross open sin is often more hopeful than one of hypocrisy, pride, and self-conceit, together with external conformity to religion. Ver. 28. Multitudes of profane and licentious people may be saved, while the proud and self-righteous will be cut off. The reason is: 1. That the wicked, the gross, have no righteousness on which they can pretend to rely. 2. Nothing so effectually prevents religion as pride and self-confidence. 3. It is more difficult to make a proud Pharisee see his sins. 4. There is often really more ingenuousness and candour, and less of malignity against the gospel, among the openly wicked than among those who are out-

## CHAPTER XXII.

*parable of the marriage feast, 1—10. Man without the wedding garment, 11—14. The question about tribute to Caesar, 15—22. The Sadducees' question about the future state, 23—33. The lawyer's question about the great commandment, 34—40. The Pharisees questioned respecting the Messiah, 41—46.*

**A**ND Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The<sup>1</sup> kingdom of heaven is

<sup>1</sup> Luke xiv 16.

ardly righteous, but who are inwardly  
ke whitened sepulchres, full of dead men's  
mes and all uncleanness.

XX. Multitudes of people profess to  
, and go not. Ver. 30. They profess to  
ve God, but they love themselves better.  
hey profess to obey him, and yet obey  
eir lusts. They are hypocrites, and  
struction must come upon them.

XXI. Sinners, when they see the  
fect of truth on others, should repent.  
er. 32. It is proof of the truth of religion;  
d they as much as others need it.

XXII. We see the goodness of God in  
nding his messengers to a lost world.  
er. 33—38. His prophets he sent one  
her another, and they were put to death.  
is well-beloved Son he sent, and he also  
as put to death. Nor is his mercy yet  
ayed. He still sends his message to  
sinners. Thousands have died as his Son  
id, in attempting to spread the gospel—  
at still he sends it. We have often,  
hen, rejected it, yet still he sends it.  
That earthly monarch would be treated  
this manner! What earthly parent  
could be so kind?

XXIII. If we improve not our privi-  
ges, they will be taken away from us.  
er. 43. The gospel will be sent to many  
of the heathen, and they will be saved.  
For to those who have had it all their  
ves, and are not saved.

XXIV. All who reject the Saviour  
must perish. Ver. 44.

## CHAPTER XXII.

1. *Spake by parables.* See Note, Matt.  
iii. 3.

2. *The kingdom of heaven.* Note,  
a. iii. 2. The phrase here means:  
God deals with man in his kingdom, or

like unto a certain king, which  
made a<sup>2</sup> marriage for his son,

3 And<sup>3</sup> sent forth his servants  
to call them that were bidden to  
the wedding: and they would not  
come.

4 Again, he sent forth other  
servants, saying, Tell them which  
are bidden, Behold, I have prepared  
my dinner: my oxen and my fat-  
lings are killed, and all things are  
ready: come unto the marriage.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xix. 7, 9. <sup>3</sup> Psal. lxxviii. 11. Jer.  
xxv. 4; xxxv. 15. Rev. xxii. 17.

in regard to the dispensation of the  
gospel, as a certain king did, &c. This  
parable refers undoubtedly to the re-  
jection of the Jews, and the calling of  
the Gentiles. The gospel, with all its privi-  
leges, was offered to the Jewish people;  
but through their wickedness and pride  
they rejected it, and all its blessings were  
offered to the Gentiles and accepted.  
This is the general truth. Many circum-  
stances are thrown in to fill out the  
narrative, which cannot be particularly  
explained. ¶ *A marriage for his son.*  
Rather a marriage-feast, or a feast on the  
occasion of the marriage of his son. The  
king here doubtless represents God, pro-  
viding for the salvation of the world.

3. *And sent forth his servants.* These  
represent the messengers that God has  
sent to invite men to his kingdom. ¶ *To  
call them that were bidden.* That is, to  
give notice to those who had before been  
invited, that the feast was ready. It  
appears that there were two invitations,  
one considerably previous to the time,  
that they might have opportunity to pre-  
pare for it, and the other to give notice  
of the precise time when they were ex-  
pected. ¶ *The wedding.* The marriage-  
feast. The same word in the original as  
in verse 2. ¶ *They would not come.*  
They might have come if they chose,  
but they would not. So all the difficulty  
that sinners ever labour under in regard  
to salvation, is in the will. It is a fixed  
determination not to come, and be saved.

4. *Other servants.* Who might press  
it on their attention. So God repeats his  
message to sinners, when they reject it.  
¶ *My dinner.* This word literally de-  
notes the meal taken about noon. It is



5 But they made light <sup>1</sup> of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise :

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated <sup>2</sup> them spitefully, and slew them.

7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth : and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed <sup>3</sup> those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cvi. 24, 25. Prov. i. 24, 25. Acts xxiv. 25. Rom. ii. 4. <sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. ii. 15. <sup>3</sup> Dan. ix. 25. Luke xix. 27.

also taken for a meal in general. As marriages, among eastern nations, were in the evening, it refers here to a meal taken at that time. ¶ *Fatlings*. This word does not refer to any particular species of animals. It denotes any fat animals. As oxen are also mentioned, however, it refers here to lambs or calves. 2 Sam. vi. 13. 1 Chron. xv. 26.

5. *But they made light of it*. Treated it with contempt, as a thing of no consequence :—an exact representation of the conduct of sinners in regard to the gospel. ¶ *One to his farm, &c.* So men are engaged so much in their worldly employment, that they pretend they have no time to attend to religion. The world is in their view of more value than God. ¶ *Merchandise*. Traffic; trading.

6. *And the remnant, &c.* That is a part made light of it, and treated it with silent contempt, and coolly went about their business. The others were not satisfied with that, but showed positive malignity. Some sinners seem to be well satisfied by merely neglecting religion ; while others proceed against it with open violence and bitter malice. ¶ *Entreated them spitefully*. Used harsh and opprobrious words, reviled and abused them. This was done because they hated and despised the king. So sinners often abuse and calumniate ministers of religion because they hate God, and can in no way else so well show that they hate him.

7. *But when the king heard, &c.* This doubtless refers to the Jews and to Jerusalem. They were murderers, having slain the prophets ; and God was about to send forth the armies of the Romans

which were bidden were not worthy.<sup>4</sup>

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all,<sup>5</sup> as many as they found, both bad and good : and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 ¶ And when the king came in <sup>6</sup> to see the guests, he saw there

<sup>4</sup> Ch. x. 11, 13. Acts xiii. 46. Rev. iii. 4; xxi. 14. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiii. 47. <sup>6</sup> Zeph. i. 12.

under his providential direction, and to burn up their city. Note, Matt. xxiv. ¶ *Wroth*. Angry; displeased.

9. *The highways*. Literally, the exit or going out of the paths or roads. It means the square, or principal street, into which a number of smaller streets enter ; a place, therefore, of confluence, where many persons would be seen, and persons of all descriptions. By this is represented the offering of the gospel to the Gentiles. They were commonly regarded among the Jews as living in highways and hedges—cast out, poor, and despised.

10. *Bad and good*. All descriptions of people. None are good, by nature ; if they were, they would not need the gospel. But some are worse than others ; and they have special need of it. None can be saved without it.

11. *A man which had not on a wedding garment*. Anciently kings and princes were accustomed to make presents of changes of raiment to their friends and favourites, to refuse to receive which was an expression of highest contempt. Gen. xlv. 22. 2 Kin. x. 22. Est. vi. 8 ; viii. 15. It was, of course, expected that such garments would be worn when they came into the presence of the benefactor. The garments worn on festival occasions were chiefly long white robes ; and it was the custom of the person who made the feast to prepare such robes to be worn by the guests. This renders the conduct of this man more inexcusable. He came in his common ordinary dress, as he was taken from the highway ; and though he had not a garment of his own suitable for the occasion, yet one had been provided

a man which had not on a wedding garment :

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment ? And he was <sup>s</sup> speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him <sup>s</sup> away, and cast him

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlv. 14. Isa. lxi. 10. <sup>2</sup> Cor. v. 3. Eph. iv. 24. Rev. xvi. 15; xix. 8. <sup>3</sup> Jer. li. 26. <sup>4</sup> Isa. lii. 1. Rev. xxi. 27.

for him, if he had applied for it. His not doing so, was expressive of the highest disrespect for the king. This beautifully represents the conduct of the hypocrite in the church. A garment of salvation might be his, wrought by the hands of the Saviour, and dyed in his blood. But the hypocrite chooses the filthy rags of his own righteousness, and thus offers the highest contempt for that provided in the gospel. He is to blame, not for being invited ; not for coming, if he would come—for he is freely invited ; but for offering the highest contempt to the King of Zion, in presenting himself with all his filth and rags, and in refusing to be saved in the way provided in the gospel.

12. *Friend. Rather, companion.* The word does not imply friendship. ¶ *He was speechless.* He had no excuse. So it will be with all hypocrites.

13. *Cast him into outer darkness.* See Note, ch. viii. 12. This, without doubt, refers to the future punishment of the hypocrite. Matt. xxiii. 23—33; xxiv. 51.

14. *Many are called, but few are chosen.* Our Saviour often uses this expression. It was probably proverbial. The Jews had been called, but few of them had been chosen to life. The great mass of the nation were wicked, and showed by their lives that they were not chosen to salvation. The Gentiles also were invited to be saved. Isa. xlv. 22. Nation after nation has been called ; but few, very few, have yet showed that they were real Christians, the elect of God. It is also true, that many who are in the church may prove to be without the wedding garment, and show at last that they were not the chosen of God. This remark in ver. 14 is the inference from the whole parable, and not from the part about the

into outer darkness ; <sup>4</sup> there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For <sup>s</sup> many are called, but few are chosen.

15 ¶ Then <sup>6</sup> went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians,

<sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 12. <sup>5</sup> Ch. vii. 14; xx. 16. Luke xii. 23, 24. <sup>6</sup> Mark xii. 13—17. Luke xx. 20, 21.

man without the wedding garment. It does not mean, therefore, that the great mass in the church are simply called and not chosen, or are hypocrites ; but the great mass in the human family, in the time of Christ, who had been called, had rejected the mercy of God.

15—22. *The Pharisees and Herodians endeavour to entangle Jesus.* This narrative is also found in Mark xii. 13—17; Luke xx. 20—26.

15. *Then went the Pharisees.* See Note, ch. iii. 7. ¶ *How they might entangle him.* To entangle means to ensnare, as birds are taken by a net. This is done secretly, by leading them within the compass of the net, and then suddenly springing it over them. So to entangle is artfully to lay a plan for enticing, to beguile by proposing a question, and by leading, if possible, to an incautious answer. This was the kind of question proposed here to Jesus. ¶ *In his talk.* The word *his* is supplied here by the translators, perhaps improperly. It means in conversation, or by talking with him ; not alluding to anything he had before said.

16. *The Herodians.* It is not certainly known who these were. It is probable that they took their name from Herod the Great. Perhaps they were first a political party, and were then distinguished for holding some of Herod's peculiar opinions. Dr. Prideaux thinks that those opinions referred to two things ; the first respecting subjection to a foreign power. The law of Moses was, that a stranger should not be set over the Jews as a king. Deut. xvii. 15. Herod, who had received the kingdom of Judea by appointment of the Romans, held that the law of Moses referred only to a voluntary choice of a king, and did not refer to a

saying, Master,<sup>1</sup> we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou?<sup>2</sup> Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?

<sup>1</sup> Jer. ix. 3—5. Ezek. xxxiii. 30, 31. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xvii. 14, 15. Ezra. iv. 13; vii. 24. Neh. ix. 37. Acts v. 37.

necessary submission, where they had been overpowered by force. They supposed, therefore, that it was lawful in such cases to pay tribute to a foreign prince. This opinion was, however, extensively unpopular among the Jews, and particularly among the Pharisees, who looked upon it as a violation of their law, and all the acts growing out of it as oppressive. Hence the difficulty of the question proposed. Whatever way Jesus decided, they supposed he would be involved in difficulty. If he should say it was not lawful, the Herodians were ready to accuse him as being an enemy of Cæsar; if he had said it was lawful, the Pharisees were ready to accuse him to the people of holding an opinion extremely unpopular among them, and as being an enemy of their rights. The other opinion which the Herodians seem to have followed, was, that when a people were subjugated by a foreign force, it was right to adopt the rites and customs of their religion. This was what was meant by the "leaven of Herod." Mark viii. 15. The Herodians and Sadducees seem on most questions to have been united. Compare Matt. xvi. 6. Mark viii. 15. ¶ *We know that thou art true.* A hypocritical compliment, not believed by them, but artfully given, as compliments often are, to conceal the speaker's true design. ¶ *Neither carest thou for any man.* That is, thou art an independent teacher, delivering sentiments without regard to the fear or favour of man. This was true, and probably they believed this. Whatever they might believe about him, they had no reason to doubt that he delivered his sentiments openly and freely. ¶ *For thou regardest not the person of men.* Thou art not partial. Thou wilt decide according to truth, and not from any bias

18 But Jesus perceived wickedness, and said, Why ye me, ye hypocrites?

19 Shew me the tribute! And they brought unto <sup>3</sup> penny.

20. And he saith unto Whose is this image and <sup>4</sup> scription?

<sup>3</sup> In value sevenpence half-penny. <sup>4</sup> scription.

towards either party. To respect person, or to respect the person, is Bible uniformly used to denote person or being influenced in a decision, truth, but by previous attachment person, or one of the parties, by ship, or bias, or prejudice, Lev. Deut. xvi. 19. 2 Sam. xiv. 14. 34. Jas. ii. 1, 3, 9. 1 Pet. Jude 16.

17. *Is it lawful to give tribute Cæsar?* Tribute was the tax paid Roman government. ¶ *Cæsar* Roman emperor. The name Cæsar the time of Julius Cæsar, became to all the emperors of Rome, as it was the common name of all the Egypt. The Cæsar that reigned at that time was Tiberius—a man distinguished for vicious vices and most disgusting baseness of sensuality.

18. *Jesus perceived their wickedness.* This must have been done by him of searching the heart, and proving he was omniscient. No mere man the power of discerning the motives of others. ¶ *Tempt ye me.* Try endeavour to lead me into difficulty an insidious question. ¶ *Hypocrites.* Professing to be inquirers, when the only object lead into difficulty. Note, ch. vi.

19. *The tribute money.* The coin in which the tribute was paid. A Roman coin. The tribute for temple service was paid in the Jewish coin that for the Roman government in coin. Their having that coin about and using it, was proof that they selves held it lawful to pay the tax and their pretensions, therefore mere hypocrisy. ¶ *A penny.* A denarius, worth sevenpence half-penny. 20. *This image.* The likeness

21 They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render<sup>1</sup> therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God<sup>2</sup> the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

23 ¶ The<sup>3</sup> same day came to him the Sadducees, which<sup>4</sup> say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If<sup>5</sup> a man die, having no children,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 25, 27. Rom. xiii. 7. <sup>2</sup> Mal. i. 6-8; iii. 8-10. <sup>3</sup> Mark xii. 18-27. Luke xx. 27-38. <sup>4</sup> Acts xxiii. 8. <sup>5</sup> Deut. xxv. 5. Beth i. 11.

reigning prince was probably struck on the coins, as it is now on most coins, English for instance, or Spanish, &c. ¶ *Super-scription*. The names and titles of the emperor.

21. *Render, therefore, to Cæsar, &c.* Cæsar's image and name on the coin proved that it was his. It was proper, therefore, to give it back to him, when he called for it. But while this was done, Jesus took occasion to charge them also to give to God what he claimed. This may mean either, 1. The annual tribute due to the temple service, implying that paying tribute to Cæsar did not free them from the obligation to do that; or, 2. That they should give their hearts, lives, property, and influence, all to God, as his due.

22. *They marvelled*. They had been foiled in their attempt. Though he had apparently decided in favour of the Herodians, yet his answer confounded both parties, and wholly prevented the use which they intended to make of it. It was so wise—it so clearly detected their wickedness, and foiled their aim—that they were confounded, and retired covered with shame.

23-33. *Conversation of Jesus with the Sadducees respecting the resurrection*. See also Mark xii. 18-27. Luke xi. 27-38.

23. *The same day came the Sadducees*. For an account of the Sadducees see Note, ch. iii. 7. ¶ *No resurrection*.

his brother shall marry his wife and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the<sup>6</sup> seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto

<sup>6</sup> Seven.

The resurrection literally means the raising up the body to life after it is dead. John v. 29; xi. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 22. But the Sadducees not only denied this, but also a future state, and the separate existence of the soul after death, as well as the existence of angels and spirits. Acts xxiii. 8. Both these doctrines have commonly stood or fallen together, and the answer of our Saviour respects both; though it more distinctly refers to the separate existence of the soul, and to a future state of rewards and punishments, than to the resurrection of the body.

24. *Saying, Master, Moses said, &c.* Deut. xxv. 5, 6. This law was given by Moses in order to keep the families and tribes of the Israelites distinct, and to perpetuate them. ¶ *Raise up seed unto his brother*. That is, the children shall be reckoned in the genealogy of the deceased brother; or, to all civil purposes, shall be considered as his.

25-28. *There were with us seven brethren*. It is probable that they stated a case as difficult as possible; and though no such case might have occurred, yet it was supposable, and in their view it presented a real difficulty. The difficulty arose from the fact that they supposed that substantially the same state of things takes place in the other world as here; that husbands and wives must be reunited; and they professed not to be able to see how one woman could be the wife of seven men.

29. *Ye do err, not knowing, &c.* They

them, Ye do err, not <sup>1</sup> knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels <sup>2</sup> of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

<sup>1</sup> John xx. 9.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 10.    1 John iii. 2.

had taken a wrong view of the doctrine of the resurrection. It was not taught that men would marry in the future state. ¶ *The scriptures.* The books of the Old Testament. By appealing to them, Christ showed that the doctrine of the future state was there, and that the Sadducees should have believed it as it was, and not have added the absurd doctrine to it that men must live there as they do here. The way in which the enemies of the truth attempt to make a doctrine of the Bible ridiculous is by adding to it, and then calling it absurd. He produced a passage from the books of Moses, ver. 32, because they had also appealed to his writings. Ver. 24. Other places of the Old Testament asserted the doctrine more clearly. Dan. xii. 2. Isa. xxvii. 19. But he wished to meet them on their own ground. None of those scriptures asserted that men would live there as they do here, and therefore their reasoning was false. ¶ *Nor the power of God.* They probably denied, as many have done since, that God could gather the scattered dust of the dead, and remould it into a body. On this ground they affirmed that the doctrine could not be true, opposing reason to revelation, and supposing that infinite power could not re-organize a body that it had at first organized, and raise a body from its own dust which it had at first raised from nothing.

30 *Neither marry, &c.* This was a full answer to the objections of the Sadducees. ¶ *But are as the angels of God.* That is, in the manner of their intercourse; in regard to marriage, and the mode of their existence. Luke adds, ch. xx. 36, that they shall be equal to the angels. That is, they shall be elevated above the circumstances of mortality, and live in a manner, and in a kind of intercourse,

32 I <sup>3</sup> am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished <sup>4</sup> at his doctrine.

34 ¶ But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sad-

<sup>3</sup> Exod. iii. 6, 15, 16.    Heb. xi. 16.    <sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 28.    Mark xii. 17.

equal to the angels. It does not imply that they shall be equal in intellect, but only in the circumstances of their existence, as that is distinguished from the way in which mortals live. He also adds, "neither do they die any more, but are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection," or being accounted worthy to be raised up to life, and therefore sons of God raised up to him.

31, 32. *As touching, &c.* That is, in proof that the dead are raised. The passage which he quotes is recorded in Exod. iii. 6, 15. This was at the burning bush. (Mark and Luke). Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had been long dead when Moses spoke this. Abraham three hundred and twenty-nine years, Isaac two hundred and twenty-four, and Jacob one hundred and ninety-eight. Yet God spake then as being still their God. They must, therefore, be still somewhere living; for God is not the God of the dead; i. e., it is absurd to say that God rules over those who are extinct or annihilated, but he is the God only of those who have an existence. Luke adds, "all live unto him." That is, all the righteous dead; all of whom he can be properly called their God, live unto his glory. This passage does not prove directly that the dead body would be raised, but only by consequence. It proved that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, still existed, or that their souls were alive. This the Sadducees denied. Acts xxiii. 8. And this was the main point in dispute. If this was admitted, if there was a state of rewards and punishments, then it would easily follow that the bodies of the dead would be raised.

34—40. *Jesus converses with a Pharisee respecting the law.* See also Mark xii. 28—34

ducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then <sup>1</sup> one of them, *which* was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 25—37.

34. *The Pharisees—were gathered together.* That is, either to rejoice that their great rivals, the Sadducees, had been so completely silenced, or to lay a new plan for ensnaring him, or perhaps both. They would rejoice that the Sadducees had been confounded, but they would not be the less desirous to involve Jesus in difficulty. They therefore endeavoured, probably, to find the most difficult question in dispute among themselves, and proposed it to him to perplex him.

35. *A lawyer.* This does not mean one that practised law, as among us; but one learned or skilled in the law of Moses. Mark calls him "one of the Scribes." This means the same thing. The Scribes were men of learning; particularly men skilled in the law of Moses. He had heard him reasoning with the Sadducees, and perceived that he answered them well; and he was thought to be better qualified to hold a debate with him. (Mark.) This man was probably of a candid turn of mind; perhaps willing to know the truth; and not entering very fully into their malicious intentions, but acting as their agent. Mark xii. 34. ¶ *Tempting him.* Trying him. Proposing a question to test his knowledge of the law.

36. *Which is the great commandment.* That is, the greatest commandment, or the one most important. The Jews are said to have divided the law into greater and smaller commandments. Which was of the greatest importance they had not determined. Some held that it was the law respecting sacrifice; others, that respecting circumcision; others, that pertaining to washings and purifying, &c. ¶ *The law.* The word *law* has a great variety of significations; it means, commonly, in the Bible, as it does here, the law given by Moses, recorded in the first five books of the Bible.

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. vi. 5; x. 12.

37. *Jesus said unto him, &c.* Mark says that he introduced this by referring to the doctrine of the unity of God—"Hear, O Israel! the Lord thy God is one Lord"—taken from Deut. vi. 4. This was said, probably, because all true obedience depends on the correct knowledge of God. None can keep his commandments who are not acquainted with his nature, his perfections, and his right to command. ¶ *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, &c.* The meaning of this is, thou shalt love him with all thy faculties or powers. Thou shalt love him supremely, more than all other beings and things, and with all the ardour possible. To love him with all the heart is to fix the affections supremely on him, more strongly than on any other object, and to be willing to give up all that we hold dear at his command. ¶ *With all thy soul.* Or with all thy life. This means, to be willing to give up the life to him, and to devote it all to his service; to live to him, and to be willing to die at his command. ¶ *With all thy mind.* To submit the intellect to his will. To love his law and gospel more than we love the decisions of our own minds. To be willing to submit all our faculties to his teaching and guidance, and to devote to him all our intellectual attainments, and all the results of our intellectual efforts. ¶ *With all thy strength.* (Mark.) With all the faculties of soul and body. To labour and toil for his glory, and to make that the great object of all our efforts.

38. *This is the first and great commandment.* This commandment is found in Deut. vi. 5. It is the first and greatest of all; first, not in order of time, but of importance; greatest in dignity, in excellence, in extent, and duration. It is the fountain of all others. All beings are to be loved according to their excellence. As God is the most excellent and glorious of all beings, he is to be loved supremely. ¶

30 And the second is like unto it, <sup>1</sup> Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments <sup>2</sup> hang all the law and the prophets.

41 ¶ While the Pharisees were

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xix. 18. <sup>2</sup> Rom. xiii. 9. Jas. ii. 8.

he is loved aright, then our affections will be directed towards all created objects in a right manner.

39. *The second is like unto it.* Lev. xix. 18. Resembles it in importance, dignity, purity, and usefulness. This had not been asked by the lawyer, but Jesus took occasion to acquaint him with the substance of the whole law. For its meaning see Note, Matt. xix. 19. Comp. Rom. xiii. 9. Mark adds, there is no greater commandment than these. None respecting circumcision or sacrifice is greater. They are the fountain of all.

40. *On these two commandments hang, &c.* That is, these comprehend the substance of what Moses in the law, and what the prophets have spoken. What they have said has been to endeavour to win men to the love of God and each other. Love to God and man comprehends the whole of religion; and to produce this has been the design of Moses, the prophets, the Saviour, and the apostles.

Mark, ch. xii. 32—34, adds that the Scribe said, "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth;" and that he assented to what Jesus had said, and admitted that to love God and man in this manner was more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. That is, was of more value or importance. Jesus, in reply, told him that he was not far from the kingdom of heaven; i. e. by his reply he had shown that he was almost prepared to receive the doctrines of the gospel. He had shown a real acquaintance with the law, an indication that he was nearly prepared to receive the teachings of Jesus. Note, ch. iii. 2.

Mark and Luke say that this answer had such an effect that no man after that durst ask him any question. Mark xii. 34. Luke xx. 40. This does not mean that none of his disciples durst ask him any question, but none of the Jews. He had confounded all their sects—the Herodians, 15—22; the Sadducees,

gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What <sup>3</sup> think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son of David.*

43 He saith unto them, How then

<sup>3</sup> Mark xii. 35—37. Luke xx. 41—44.

23—33; and last, the Pharisees, 34—40. All finding themselves unable to confound him, they gave up the attempt.

41—46. Jesus proposes a question concerning the Messiah. See also Mark xii. 35—37. Luke xx. 41—44.

41. *While the Pharisees, &c.* Jews, having confounded the great sects of the Jews, proceeds in his turn to propose to them a question for their solution. This was done, not for the purpose of vain parade and triumph, but, 1. To show them how ignorant they were of the prophecies. 2. To humble them in view of their ignorance. 3. To bring to their attention the true doctrine respecting the Messiah, his being possessed of a character superior to that of David, the most mighty king of Israel, being his Lord, at the same time that he was his descendant.

42. *What think ye of Christ? What are your views respecting the Messiah, or the Christ, especially respecting his genealogy?* He did not ask them their views respecting him in general, but only respecting his ancestry. The article should have been retained in the translation, *the Christ, or the Messiah.* He did not ask them their opinion respecting himself, his person, and work, as would seem in our translation; but their views respecting the Messiah whom they expected. ¶ *Whose son is he? Whose descendant?* Note, Matt. i. 1. ¶ *The Son of David.* The descendant of David, according to the promise.

43. *How then, &c.* How is this doctrine, that he is descended from David consistent with what David said when he calls him lord? How can your opinion be reconciled with that? That is recorded in Psa. cx. 1. A lord or master is a superior. The word here does not necessarily imply divinity, but only superiority. David calls him his superior, his lord, his master, his lawgiver; and expresses his willingness to obey him. If the Messiah was to be merely a descendant of David,

doth David in spirit call him<sup>1</sup> Lord, saying,

44 The Lord said unto my Lord,  
1<sup>st</sup> Pet. cx. 1. Acts ii. 34, 35. Heb. i. 13; x. 12, 13.

as other men descended from parents, if he was to have a human nature only, as you Jews suppose, if he did not exist when David wrote, with what propriety could he, then, call him his lord? ¶ *In spirit.* By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. As a prophet. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. Acts i. 16; ii. 30.

44. *The Lord said, &c.* This is the language of David. Jehovah said to my Lord—the Messiah—sit thou, &c. This was a prediction respecting the exaltation of Christ. To be raised to the right hand of a king was significant of favour, trust, and power. Note, Matt. xx. 21. This was done respecting Christ. Mark xvi. 19. Acts vii. 55. Rom. viii. 34. Eph. i. 20. Heb. i. 3; viii. 1; x. 12. ¶ *Thine enemies thy footstool.* A footstool is that which is under the feet when we are sitting, implying that we have it under subjection, or at our control. So he shall put all enemies under his feet, all his spiritual foes, all that rise up against him. Ps. ii. 9, 12. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Heb. x. 13.

45. *If David, &c.* If he was, then, David's lord, if he was his superior, if he had an existence at that time, how could he be descended from him. They could not answer him. Nor is there any way of answering the question but by the admission that the Messiah was divine as well as human. That he had an existence at the time of David, and was his Lord and master, his God and king; and that a man he was descended from him.

#### REMARKS.

I. Multitudes of men who are invited to be saved, reject the gospel, and perish at their sins. Ver. 3.

II. If they perish, themselves only will be to blame. The offer was freely made, the salvation was provided, and the only reason why they were not saved was because they would not come to Christ. Ver. 1. John v. 40.

III. Attention to the affairs of this life, the love of the world, will shut many out of the kingdom of heaven. Ver. 5. Give attention to those things is necessary; but such as to lead to the loss of the soul never can be right.

Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

IV. It is treating God ungratefully to reject his gospel. Ver. 3—5. He has sent his Son to die for us. He has entreated us to be saved. He has followed us with mercies. And to reject all these, and refuse to be saved, is to treat him with contempt, as well as to overwhelm ourselves in condemnation. Man has no right to be damned. He is under the most solemn obligations to be saved. And after what God has done for us, deep and awful woe will await us if we are so foolish and wicked as to be lost.

V. Many of the poor and needy will be saved, while the haughty and rich will perish for ever. Ver. 9, 10.

VI. Let those who make a profession of religion look often to the great day when Christ will search them. Ver. 11. There is a day coming that will try us. His eye will be upon us. He will read our hearts, and see whether we are clothed in his righteousness, or only the filthy rags of our own.

VII. A mere profession of religion will not save us. Ver. 11—13. It is foolish to deceive ourselves. It is vain to attempt to deceive God. Nothing but genuine piety, true faith in Jesus, and a holy life, will save us. God asks not profession merely, but the heart. He asks not mockery, but sincerity; not pretension, but reality.

VIII. The hypocrite must perish. Ver. 13. It is right that he should perish. He knew his Master's will, and would not do it. He must perish with an awful condemnation. No man sins amidst so much light; none with so high a hand. No sin is so awful as to attempt to deceive God and to palm pretensions on him for reality.

IX. Pretended friends are sometimes more dangerous than avowed enemies. Ver. 16. Pretended friendship is often for the purpose of decoying us into evil. It throws us off our guard, and we are more easily taken.

X. The truth is often admitted by wicked men from mere hypocrisy. Ver. 16. It is only for the purpose of deceiving and leading into sin.



46 And <sup>1</sup> no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst

<sup>1</sup> Luke xiv. 6.

any *man* from that day forth ask him any more <sup>2</sup> *questions*.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xii. 34. Luke xx. 40.

XI. Wicked men can decide correctly on the character of a public preacher. Ver. 16. They often admit his claim in words, but for an evil purpose.

XII. It may be right for us sometimes to attend to artful and captious questions. Ver. 18. It may afford opportunity to do good, to confound the wicked, and to inculcate truth.

XIII. No cunning can overreach God. Ver. 17. He knows the heart, and he will perceive the wickedness of all who attempt to deceive him.

XIV. It is right to obey the law of the land. Ver. 21. Conscientious Christians make the best citizens.

XV. We should give honour to civil rulers. Ver. 21. We should pay respect to the office, whatever may be the character of the ruler. We should speak well of it, not abuse it, yield proper obedience to the requirements, and not rebel against it. Men may be wicked who hold an office, but the office is ordained by God, Rom. xiii. 1, 2; and for the sake of the office we must be patient, meek, submissive, and obedient. Matt. xxiii. 3.

XVI. Yet we are to obey civil rulers no further than their commands are consistent with the law of God. Ver. 21. God is to be obeyed rather than man. And when a civil ruler commands a thing contrary to the laws of the Bible and the dictates of our consciences, we may, we must resist it.

XVII. The objections of men to the doctrines of the Bible are founded on ignorance of what those doctrines are, and distrust of the power of God. Ver. 29. Men often set up a notion which they call a doctrine of the Bible, and then fight a shadow, and think they have confuted the truth of God, while the truth was untouched. It is a totally different thing from what they supposed.

XVIII. When men attack a doctrine, they should be certain that they understand it. Ver. 29. The Sadducees did not understand the true doctrine of the resurrection. The inquiry which they *should have made was*, whether they had *correct views* of it. This is the inquiry

which men ought always to make when they approach a doctrine of the Bible.

XIX. We learn the glory and happiness of the state after the resurrection. Ver. 30. (Luke.) We shall be in some respects equal to the angels. Like them we shall be free from sin, suffering, and death. Like them we shall be complete in knowledge and felicity. Like them we shall be secure of eternal joy. Happy are those, the good of all the earth, who shall have part in that resurrection of the just.

XX. The dead shall be raised. Ver. 31, 32. There is a state of happiness hereafter. This the gospel has revealed; and it is the most consoling and cheering truth that has ever beamed upon the heart of man.

XXI. Our pious friends that have died are now happy. Ver. 31, 32. They are with God. God is still their God. A father, or mother, or sister, or friend, that may have left us, is there—there is perfect felicity. We should rejoice at that, nor should we wish them back to the poor comforts, and the many sufferings of this world.

XXII. It is our duty to love God with all the heart. Ver. 37. No half, formal, cold, and selfish affection comes up to the requirement. It must be full, entire, absolute. It must be pleasure in all his attributes—his justice, his power, his purposes, as well as his mercy and his goodness. God is to be loved just as he is. If man is not pleased with his whole character, he is not pleased with him at all.

XXIII. God is worthy of love. He is perfect. He should be early loved. Children should love him more than they do father, or mother, or friends. Their first affections should be fixed on God, and fixed on him supremely, till they die.

XXIV. We must love our neighbour. Ver. 39. We must do to all as we would have them do to us. This is the law and the prophets. This is the way of justice, of peace, of kindness, of charity, and of benevolence. If all men obeyed these laws, the earth would be a paradise, and

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*scribes and Pharisees described and warned against, 1—12. Scribes, &c. denounced, 13—36. Jerusalem's fate deplored, 37—39.*

**W**HEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,  
 2 Saying, The <sup>1</sup> scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat :

<sup>1</sup> Mal. ii. 7.

we would taste the bliss of heaven here now.

XXV. We may ask here of each one, *What think you of Christ?* Ver. 42. *What think you of the necessity of a saviour?* What think you of his nature? Is he God as well as man, or do you regard him only as a man? What think you of his character? Do you see him to be lovely and pure, and is he such as draw forth the warm affections of your art? What think you of salvation by him? Do you depend on him, and trust in him, and expect heaven only on the ground of his merits? Or do you reject and despise him, and would you have need in putting him to death? Nothing so certainly tests the character, and shows what the feelings are, than the ways which we entertain of Christ. Error is fatal error; but he who has just views of the Redeemer, and right feelings towards him, is sure of salvation.

XXVI. We have in this chapter an ostentatious specimen of the wisdom of *us*. He successfully met the snares of his mighty and crafty foes, and with finite ease confounded them. No art or man could confound him. Never was wisdom more clear, never more triumphant.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

2 *Scribes and Pharisees.* Note, Matt. 23. 2. ¶ *Moses' seat.* Moses was a legislator of the Jews. By him the law was given; and the office of explaining that law devolved on the Scribes and Pharisees. In the synagogues they sat while expounding the law, and rose when they read it. By sitting in the seat of Moses we are to understand authority to teach the law. As he taught the nation by giving the law, so they taught it by explaining it.

3 <sup>2</sup> All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for <sup>3</sup> they say, and do not.

4 For they bind heavy burdens <sup>4</sup> and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xviii. 19—23. <sup>3</sup> Rom. ii. 21—23. <sup>4</sup> Acts xv. 10.

3. *All, therefore, whatsoever, &c.* That is, all that they teach consistent with the law of Moses; all the commands of Moses which they read to you and properly explain. The word *all* could not be taken without such a restriction, for Christ himself accuses them of teaching many things contrary to that law, and of making it void by traditions. Matt. xv. 1—6. ¶ *They say and do not.* The interpretation they give to the law is in the main correct, but their lives do not correspond with their teaching. It is not the duty of men to imitate their teachers unless their lives are pure; but they are rather to obey the law of God than to frame their lives by the example of evil men.

4. *They bind heavy burdens, &c.* This phrase is derived from the custom of loading animals. The load or burden is bound up, and then laid on the beast. So the Pharisees appointed weighty burdens, or grievous and heavy precepts, and insisted that the people should obey them, though they lent no assistance. The *heavy burdens* refer not here to the traditions and foolish customs of the Pharisees, for Jesus would not command the people to observe them; but they clearly mean the ceremonies and rites appointed by Moses, which Peter says neither they nor their fathers were able to bear. Acts xv. 10. Those rites were numerous, expensive, requiring much time, much property, and labour. The Pharisees were rigid in requiring that all the people should pay the taxes, give of their property, comply with every part of the law with the utmost rigour, yet they indulged themselves, and bore as little of the expense and trouble as possible; so that where they could avoid it, they would not lend the least aid to the people in the toils and expense of their religious rites. ¶ *With one of their*

5 But <sup>1</sup>all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, <sup>2</sup>and en-

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 1, 2, 5, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Num. xv. 38.

*fingers.* In the least degree. They will not render the least aid.

5. *Their phylacteries.* The word *phylactery* comes from a word signifying to keep, preserve, or guard. The name was given because phylacteries were worn as amulets or charms, and were supposed to defend from evil. They were small slips of parchment or velum, on which were written certain portions of the Old Testament. The practice of using phylacteries was founded on a literal interpretation of that passage where God commands the Hebrews to have the law as a sign on their foreheads, and as frontlets between their eyes. Exod. xiii. 16. Compare Prov. iii. 1, 3; vi. 21. One kind of phylactery was called a frontlet, and was composed of four pieces of parchment, on the first of which was written, Exod. xii. 2—10; on the second, Exod. xiii. 11—21; on the third, Deut. vi. 4—9; and on the fourth, Deut. xi. 18—21. These pieces of parchment, thus inscribed, they enclosed in a piece of tough skin, making a square, on one side of which is placed the Hebrew letter Shin,  $\aleph$ , and bound them round their foreheads with a thong or riband when they went to the synagogue. Some wore them evening and morning, and others only at the morning prayer.

As the token upon the hand was required, as well as the frontlets between the eyes, the Jews made two rolls of parchment, written in square letters, with an ink made on purpose, and with much care. They were rolled up to a point, and enclosed in a sort of case of black calf-skin. They were put upon a square bit of the same leather, whence hung a thong of the same, of about a finger in breadth, and about two feet long. These rolls were placed at the bending of the left arm, and after one end of the thong had been made into a little knot in the form of the Hebrew letter Yod,  $\aleph$ , it was wound about the arm in a spiral line, which ended at the top of the middle finger. The Pharisees enlarged them, or made them wider than other people, either

large the borders of their garments,

6 And <sup>3</sup>love the uppermost rooms

<sup>3</sup> Mark xii. 38, 39.

Luke xi. 43.

that they might make the letters larger, & write more on them; to show, as they supposed, that they had peculiar reverence for the law. ¶ *Enlarge the borders of their garments.* This refers to the loose threads which were attached to the borders of the outer garment as a fringe. This fringe was commanded in order to distinguish them from other nations, and that they might remember to keep the commandments of God. Num. xv. 38—40. Deut. xxii. 12. The Pharisees made them broader than other people wore them, to show that they had peculiar respect for the law.

6. *The uppermost rooms at feasts.* The word *rooms*, here, by no means expresses the meaning of the original. It would be correctly rendered the uppermost places or couches at feasts. To understand this it is necessary to remark that the custom among the Jews was not to eat sitting, as we do, but reclining on couches. The table was made by three tables, raised like ours, and placed so as to form a square, with a clear space in the midst, and one end quite open. At the sides of them were placed cushions, capable of containing three or more persons. On these the guests reclined, leaning on their left side, with their feet extended from the table, and so lying that the head of one naturally reclined on the bosom of another. To recline near to one in this manner denoted intimacy, and was what was meant by lying in the bosom of another. Luke xvi. 22, 23. John xiii. 23. As the feet were extended from the table, and as they reclined instead of sitting, it was easy to approach the feet behind, and even unperceived. Thus in Luke vii. 37, 38, while Jesus reclined in this manner, a woman that had been a sinner came to his feet, behind him, and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. She stood on the outside of the couch. So our Saviour washed the feet of his disciples as they reclined on a couch in this manner. John xiii. 4—12. Whenever we read in the New Testament of sitting at meals, it always means reclining in this manner,

at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues.

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, <sup>1</sup> Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 But <sup>2</sup> be not ye called Rabbi :

<sup>1</sup> John i. 38; iii. 2, 26; xx. 16. <sup>2</sup> Jas. iii. 1.

and never sitting as we do. The chief seat, or the uppermost one, was the middle couch at the upper end of the table. This the Pharisees loved as a post of honour or distinction. ¶ *Chief seats in the synagogues.* The seats usually occupied by the elders of the synagogue, near the pulpit. They love a place of distinction. Note, ch. iv. 23.

¶ *Greetings in the markets.* Marks of particular respect shown to them in public places. Markets were places where multitudes of people were assembled together. They were pleased with particular attention among the multitude, and desired that all should show them particular respect. ¶ *Greetings.* Salutations. See Note, Luke x. 4. ¶ *To be called, Rabbi, Rabbi.* This word literally signifies great. It was a title given to eminent teachers of the law among the Jews; a title of honour and dignity, denoting their authority and ability to teach. They were gratified with such titles, and wished it given to themselves as denoting superiority. Every time it was given to them it implied their superiority to the persons who used it; and they were fond, therefore, of hearing it often applied to them. There were three titles in use among the Jews, Rab, Rabbi, and Rabban, denoting different degrees of learning and ability, as literary degrees do among us.

8. *Be not ye, &c.* Jesus forbade his disciples to seek such titles of distinction. The reason he gave was that he was himself their Master and Teacher. They were on a level; they were to be equal in authority; they were brethren; and they should neither covet nor receive a title which implied either an elevation of one above another, or which appeared to infringe on the absolute right of the Saviour to be their only Teacher and Master. The command here is an express command to his disciples not to receive such a title of distinction. They were not to covet it; they were not to seek it; they

for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren.<sup>3</sup>

9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your <sup>4</sup> Father, which is in heaven.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. iii. 15. Rev. i. 9; xxii. 9. <sup>4</sup> Ch. vi. 9.

were not to do any thing that implied a wish or a willingness that it should be appended to their names. Every thing which would tend to make a distinction among them, or destroy their parity; every thing which would lead the world to suppose that there were ranks and grades among them as ministers, they were to avoid. It is to be observed that the command is, that they were not to receive the title. "Be not ye called Rabbi." The Saviour did not forbid them to give the title to others when it was customary or not regarded as improper. Comp. Acts xxvi. 25; but they were not to receive it. It was to be unknown among them. This title corresponds with the title, Doctor of Divinity, as applied to ministers of the gospel; and so far as I can see, the spirit of the Saviour's command is violated by the reception of such a title, as it would have been by their being called Rabbi. It is a literary distinction. It does not appropriately pertain to office. It makes a distinction among ministers. It tends to engender pride, and a sense of superiority in those who obtain it; and envy and a sense of inferiority in those who do not; and the whole spirit and tendency of it is contrary to the simplicity that is in Christ.

9. *And call no man your father, &c.* This does not of course forbid us to apply the term to our real father. Religion requires all proper honour to be shown to him. Exod. xx. 12. Matt. xv. 4. Eph. vi. 1—3. But the word *father* also denotes authority, eminence, superiority, a right to command, and a claim to particular respect. In this sense it is used here. In this sense it belongs eminently to God, and it is not right to give it to men. Christian brethren are equal. God only has supreme authority. He only has a right to give laws, to declare doctrines to bind the conscience, to punish disobedience. The Jewish teachers affected that title because they seem to

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

11 But <sup>1</sup>he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

12 And <sup>2</sup>whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased: and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xx. 26, 27.    <sup>2</sup> Prov. xv. 33. Jas. iv. 6.

have supposed that a teacher formed the man, or gave him real life, and sought therefore to be called father. Christ taught them that the source of all life and truth was God; and they ought not to seek or receive a title which properly belongs to him.

10. *Neither—masters.* Leaders. Those who go before others; who claim, therefore, the right to direct and control others. This was also a title conferred on Jewish teachers.

Neither of these commands forbids us to give proper titles of civil office to men, or to render them the honour belonging to their station. Matt. xxii. 21. Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 17. They forbid the disciples of Jesus to seek or receive mere empty titles, producing distinctions among themselves, implying authority to control the opinions and conduct of others, and claiming that others should acknowledge them to be superior to them.

11, 12. See Note, ch. xx. 26. *He that humbleth himself, &c.* God will exalt or honour him that is humble, and that seeks a lowly place among men. That is true religion, and God will reward it.

13. *Woe unto you.* You are guilty, and punishment will come unto you. He proceeds to state wherein they were guilty. This most eloquent, most appalling, and most terrible of all discourses ever delivered to mortals, was pronounced in the temple, in the presence of multitudes. Never was there more faithful dealing, more terrible reproof, more profound knowledge of the workings of hypocrisy, or more skill in detecting the concealments of sin. This was the last of Christ's public discourses; and it is a most impressive summary of all he ever had said, or had to say, of a wicked and hypocritical generation. ¶ *Scribes and Pharisees.* Note, Matt. iii. 7. ¶ *Hypocrites.* Note, Matt. vi. 2. ¶ *Ye shut up*

13 ¶ But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees,<sup>3</sup> hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye de-  
<sup>3</sup> Isa. ix. 14, 15; xxxiii. 14. Zech. xi. 17. Luke xi. 43, 44.

*the kingdom of heaven.* Note, Matt. iii. 2. They shut it up by their doctrines. By teaching false doctrines respecting the Messiah; by binding the people to an observance of their traditions; by opposing Jesus, and attempting to convince the people that he was an impostor, they prevented many from becoming his followers. Many were ready to embrace Jesus as the Messiah, and were about entering into the kingdom of heaven, i. e. the church, but they prevented it. *Luke* says, ch. xi. 52, that they had taken away the key of knowledge, and thus prevented their entering in. That is, they had taken away the right interpretation of the ancient prophecies respecting the Messiah, and thus had done all they could to prevent the people from receiving Jesus as the Redeemer.

14. *Devour widows' houses.* The word *houses* is here used to denote property or possessions of any kind. You take away, or get possession of, by improper arts and pretences. This was done in two ways: 1. They pretended to a very exact knowledge of the law, and to a perfect observance of it. They pretended to extraordinary justice to the poor, friendship for the distressed, and willingness to aid those who were in embarrassed circumstances. They thus induced widows and poor people to commit the management of their property to them, as guardians and executors, and then took advantage of them, and defrauded them. 2. By their long prayers they put on the appearance of great sanctity, and induced many weak women to give them much, under pretence of devoting it to religious purposes. ¶ *Long prayers.* Their prayers are said to have been often three hours in length. One rule among them, says Lightfoot, was to meditate an hour, then pray an hour, and then meditate another hour, all of which was included in their

widows' houses,<sup>1</sup> and for a  
 ence make long prayer: there-  
 ye shall receive the greater  
 nation.

5 Woe unto you, scribes and  
 risees, hypocrites! for ye com-  
 sea and land to make one  
 elyte, and when he is made,  
 make him twofold more the child  
 hell than yourselves.

sed. xxii. 22—24. Job xxii. 9; xxxi.  
 8. 2 Tim. iii. 6. Tit. i. 11. <sup>3</sup> John viii.  
 Acts xiii. 10. Eph. ii. 3.

prayers or devotions. ¶ *Damnation.*  
 emnation. The word here probably  
 to future punishment. It does not  
 ra, however. It means, frequently,  
 ore than condemnation, or the divine  
 probation of a certain course of con-  
 as in 1 Cor. xi. 29: "He that  
 and drinketh unworthily, eateth  
 drinketh damnation to himself."  
 is, he that eateth and drinketh in an  
 rthy manner, disorderly, not with  
 ence, is guilty, and his conduct will  
 approved or condemned by God;  
 ing solely to the impropriety of the  
 er of partaking of the Lord's  
 x, and not at all to the worthiness  
 nworthiness of the person. See  
 on that place. Compare Rom. xiv.  
 ¶ *For a pretence.* For appearance  
 ow; in order that they might the  
 r defraud poor people. They would  
 be condemned for making long  
 rs, but because they did it with an  
 design. Public prayers should,  
 ver, be short, and always to the  
 . A teacher praying in a Sunday  
 d should pray for the school, and  
 ly not for everything else.

. *Ye compass sea and land.* Ye  
 every means, spare no pains to  
 proselytes. ¶ *Proselyte.* One  
 comes over from a foreign nation,  
 ion, or sect, to us. A convert. Among  
 Jews there were two kinds of pro-  
 sa. 1. Proselytes of righteousness,  
 one who wholly and fully embraced  
 Jewish religion, were baptized, cir-  
 cized, and who conformed to all the  
 of the Mosaic institutions. 2. Pro-  
 es of the gate, or those who ap-  
 ed of the Jewish religion, renounced  
 pagan superstitions, and conformed

16 Woe unto you, ye blind<sup>2</sup>  
 guides, which say, Whosoever shall  
 swear by the temple,<sup>4</sup> it is no-  
 thing; but whosoever shall swear  
 by the gold of the temple, he is  
 a debtor!

17 Ye fools<sup>5</sup> and blind: for  
 whether is greater, the gold, or  
 the temple that sanctifieth the  
 gold?

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xv. 14. Isa. lvi. 10, 11. John ix.  
 39—41. <sup>4</sup> Ch. v. 33, 34. Jas. v. 12. <sup>5</sup> Psa.  
 xciv. 8.

to some of the rites of the Jews, but  
 were not circumcised or baptized. ¶ *Two-  
 fold more the child of hell.* That is,  
 twice as bad. To be a child of hell, was  
 a Hebrew phrase, signifying to be de-  
 serving of hell, to be awfully wicked.  
 Note, ch. i. 1. The Jewish writers them-  
 selves say that the proselytes were "scabs  
 of Israel," and "hindered the coming of  
 the Messiah" by their great wickedness.  
 The Pharisees gained them either to  
 swell their numbers, or to make gain by  
 extorting their money under various pre-  
 tentences; and when they had accomplished  
 that, they took no pains to instruct them,  
 or to restrain them. They had renounced  
 their superstition, which had before some-  
 what restrained them. The Pharisees  
 had given them no religion in its place to  
 restrain them, and they were consequently  
 left to the full indulgence of their vices.

16. *Whosoever shall swear, &c.* See  
 Note, ch. v. 33—37. ¶ *The temple.*  
 Note, ch. xxi. 12. ¶ *It is nothing.* It  
 amounts to nothing. It is not binding.  
 ¶ *The gold of the temple.* Either the  
 golden vessels in the temple, the candle-  
 stick, &c., or the gold with which the  
 doors and other parts of the temple were  
 covered; or the gold in the treasury.  
 This, it seems, they considered far more  
 sacred than any other part of the temple,  
 but it is not known why. ¶ *He is a  
 debtor.* He is bound to keep his oath.  
 He is guilty if he violates it.

17. *The temple that sanctifieth the gold.*  
 To sanctify is to make holy. The gold  
 had no holiness but what it derived from  
 the temple. If in any other place it  
 would be no more holy than any other  
 gold. It was foolish, then, to suppose  
 that that was more holy than the temple

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is <sup>1</sup> guilty.

19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth <sup>2</sup> the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *d. litor*, or, *bound*. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xxix. 37; xxx. 29.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him <sup>3</sup> that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne <sup>4</sup> of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for <sup>5</sup> ye pay tithe of mint and anise <sup>6</sup> and cummin, and have omitted the

<sup>3</sup> 2 Chron. vi. 2. <sup>4</sup> Psa. xxi. 8. <sup>5</sup> Ch. v. 24. <sup>6</sup> Psa. xl. 4. Isa. lxvi. 1. <sup>7</sup> Luke xi. 42. <sup>8</sup> *Dill*.

from which it received all the sanctity which it possessed.

18. *The altar.* The altar of burnt-offerings, in the court of the priests. Note, ch. xxi. 12. It was made of brass, about thirty feet in length and breadth, and fifteen feet in height. 2 Chron. iv. 1. On this altar were offered all the beasts and bloody oblations of the temple. ¶ *The gift that is upon it.* The gift or offering made to God, so called because it was devoted or given to him. The gift upon this altar was always beasts and birds.

19. *The altar that sanctifieth the gift.* The altar, dedicated to God, gave all the value or holiness to the offering, and must therefore be the greatest, or of the most importance. If, therefore, either bound to the fulfilment of an oath, it must be the altar.

21. *Him that dwelleth therein.* That is, God. The temple was his house, his dwelling. In the first, or Solomon's temple, he dwelt between the cherubim, in the most holy place. He manifested himself there by a visible symbol, in the form of a cloud resting on the mercy-seat. 1 Kin. viii. 10, 13. Psa. lxxx. 1.

22. *The throne of God.* Heaven is his throne, ch. v. 34. It is so called as being the place where he sits in glory. Jesus says, here, that all who swear at all, do in fact swear by God, or the oath is good for nothing. To swear by an altar, a gift, or a temple, is of no force, unless it be meant to appeal to God himself. The essential thing in an oath is calling God to witness our sincerity. If a real oath is taken, therefore, God is appealed to. If not, it is foolish and wicked to swear by anything else.

23. *Ye pay tithes.* A tenth part. The law required the Jews to devote a tenth part of all their property to the support of the Levites. Numb. xviii. 20—24. Another tenth part they paid for the service of the sanctuary, commonly in cattle or grain; but where they lived far from the place of worship, they changed it to money. Deut. xiv. 22, 23, 24. Besides these, there was to be every third year a tenth part given to the poor, to be eaten at their own dwellings. Deut. xix. 28, 29. So that nearly one-third of the property of the Jews was devoted to religious services by law. This was beside the voluntary offerings which they made. How much more mild and gentle are the laws of Christianity under which we live! ¶ *Mint.* A garden herb, in the original so called from its agreeable flavour. It was used to sprinkle the floors of their houses and synagogues, to produce a pleasant fragrance. ¶ *Anise.* Known commonly among us as dill. It has a fine aromatic smell, and is used by confectioners and perfumers. ¶ *Cummin.* A plant of the same genus, like fennel, and used for similar purposes. These were all herbs of little value. The law of Moses said that they should pay tithes of the fruits of the earth. Deut. xiv. 22. It said nothing, however, about herbs. It was a question whether they should be tithed. The Pharisees maintained, in their extraordinary strictness, that they ought. Our Saviour says that they were precise in doing small matters, which the law had not expressly commanded, while they omitted the greater things which it had enjoined. ¶ *Judgment.* Justice to others, as magistrates, neighbours, citizens. Giving to all their just dues. ¶ *Mercy.*

righter matters<sup>1</sup> of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to have the other undone.

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for<sup>2</sup> ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 13. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Jer. xxii. 15. <sup>2</sup> Hos. vi. 6. Mic. vi. 8. <sup>3</sup> Mark vii. 4-8.

Compassion and kindness to the poor and charitable. ¶ *Faith*. Piety towards God; confidence in him. Faith in God here means that we are to give to him what is due; as mercy and justice mean to do men, in all circumstances, what is right toward them. ¶ *These ought ye to have done*. Attention to even the smallest parts of the law of God is proper, but should not interfere with the higher and more important parts of that law.

24. *Which strain at a gnat, &c.* This is a proverb. There is, however, a misapprehension or misprint here, which makes it verse unmeaning. To strain at a gnat means no sense. It should have been, strain out a gnat; and so it is printed in some of the earlier versions; and so it is undoubtedly rendered by the translators. The common reading is a mistake, and should be corrected. The text means, to strain out by a cloth or sieve. ¶ *A gnat*. The gnat has its origin in the water, not in great rivers, but in pools and marshes. In the stagnant waters they appear in the form of small grubs, or larvæ. These larvæ retain their form about three weeks, after which they turn to chrysalids; and after three or four days they pass to the form of gnats. They are then distinguished by their well-known sharp sting. It is probable that the Saviour here refers to the insect as it exists in its grub or larva form, where it appears in the form of a gnat. Water is then its element, and those who are nice in their drink would take pains to strain it out. Hence the proverb. See Calmet's Dic. Art. *Gnat*. It is here used to denote a very small matter, as a camel to denote a large object. "You, Jews,

20 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto<sup>3</sup> whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also<sup>4</sup> outwardly

<sup>3</sup> Luke xi. 44. Acts xxiii. 3. <sup>4</sup> 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Psal. li. 6. Jer. xvii. 9, 10.

take great pains to avoid offence in very small matters, superstitiously observing the smallest points of the law, like a man carefully straining out the animalcules from his wine; while you are at no pains to avoid great sins; hypocrisy, deceit, oppression, and lust; like a man who should swallow a camel." The Arabians have a similar proverb: "He eats an elephant, and is suffocated with a gnat." He is troubled with little things, but pays no attention to great matters.

25. *The cup and the platter*. The drinking cup, and the dish containing food. The Pharisees were diligent in observing all the washings and oblations required by their traditions. ¶ *Full of extortion and excess*. The outside appeared well. The inside was filled with the fruit of extortion, oppression, and wickedness. The meaning is that though they took much pains to appear well, yet they obtained a living by extortion and crime. Their cups, neat as they appeared outward, were filled not with the fruits of honest industry, but were extorted from the poor by wicked arts. Instead of excess, many manuscripts and editions of the Greek Testament read wickedness.

26. *Cleanse first, &c.* Let them be filled with the fruits of honest industry, and then the outside and the inside will be really clean. By this allusion to the cup and platter, he taught them that it was necessary to cleanse the heart first, that the external conduct might be really pure and holy.

27. *Like unto whited sepulchres*. For the construction of sepulchres, see Note, ch. viii. 28. Those tombs were annually whitewashed, to prevent the people



appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would

from accidentally coming in contact with them as they went up to Jerusalem. The law considered those persons unclean who had touched anything belonging to the dead. Num. xix. 16. Sepulchres were, therefore, often whitewashed, that they might be distinctly seen. Thus whited, they appeared beautiful. But within they contained the bones and corrupting bodies of the dead. So the Pharisees. Their outward conduct appeared well. But their hearts were full of hypocrisy, envy, pride, lust, and malice—fitly represented by the corruption within a whited tomb.

29. *Ye build the tombs of the prophets.* That is, ye build sepulchres or tombs over the prophets that have been slain. This they did professedly from veneration, and respect for their character. This is often done in the east, at the present day, and indeed elsewhere. Among the Mahometans it is a common way of showing respect for any distinguished man to build a tomb for him. By doing this, they profess respect for his character and veneration for his memory. So the Pharisees, by building tombs in this manner, professedly approved of the character and conduct of the prophets, and disapproved of the conduct of their fathers in killing them. ¶ *And garnish, &c.* That is, adorn or ornament. This was done by rebuilding them with more taste, decorating them, and keeping them neat and clean. The original word means, also, to show any proper honour to the memory of the dead; as by speaking well of them, praying near them, or rearing synagogues near to them, in honour of their memory.

30. *And say, &c.* This they professed to say, by rebuilding their tombs. They also, probably, publicly expressed their disapprobation of the conduct of

not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation<sup>s</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts vii. 52. <sup>1</sup> Thess. ii. 15. <sup>2</sup> Gen. xv. 16. <sup>1</sup> Thess. ii. 16. <sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 7.

their fathers. All this, in building and ornamenting tombs, was a profession of extraordinary piety. Our Lord showed them it was mere pretence.

31. *Ye be witnesses to yourselves.* The emphasis here lies in the words *to yourselves*. It was an appeal to their conscience. It was not by their building the tombs that they were witnesses that they were the children of those who slew the prophets; but in spite of all this pretence to piety, under cloak of all this profession, they knew in their consciences, and were witnesses to themselves, that it was mere hypocrisy, and that they really approved the conduct of those who slew the prophets. ¶ *Children of them, &c.* Resembling them; approving their conduct; inheriting their feelings. They not only showed that they were descended from them, but that they possessed their spirit, and in similar circumstances would have done as they did.

32. *Fill ye up, then, &c.* This is a prediction of what they were about to do. He would have them to act out their true spirit, and show what they were, and evince to all that they had the spirit of their fathers. This was done by putting him to death, and persecuting the apostles. ¶ *The measure.* The full amount, so as to make it complete. By your slaying me, fill up what is lacking of the iniquity of your fathers till the measure is full, the national iniquity is complete, as much has been committed as God can possibly bear, and then shall come upon you all this blood, and you shall be destroyed. Ver. 34, 35.

33. *Ye serpents.* This name is given to them on account of their pretending to be pious, and very much devoted to God, but being secretly evil. At the heart, with all their pretensions, they were filled

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Jerusalem.*

how can ye escape the of hell?

Therefore, behold, I send prophets, and wise men, : and *some* of them ye and crucify; and *some* all ye scourge <sup>2</sup> in your

. <sup>2</sup> Acts v. 40. <sup>2</sup> Cor. xi.

signs, as the serpent was.

. ¶ *Generation of vipers.*

b. xii. 34. ¶ *Damnation*

refers, beyond all question,

ishment. So great was their

hypocrisy, that if they per-

his course, it was impossi-

the damnation that should

guilty. This is the stern-

that Jesus ever used to wick-

it by no means authorizes

such language to sinners

knew that this was true of

an authority which none

It is not the province of

enounce judgment, or to use

; least of all to do it on pre-

ating Christ. He knew the

en. We know them not.

hority to declare certainly

om he addressed would be

ive no such authority. He

sons; we address characters.

*d unto you prophets, &c.*

refers here to the apostles,

chers of religion. Prophets,

l scribes, were the names by

chers of religion were known

ews, and he, therefore, used

ms when speaking of the

nich he would send. *I send*

synagogues, and persecute *them* from city <sup>3</sup> to city :

35 That <sup>4</sup> upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel <sup>5</sup> unto the blood of Zacharias <sup>6</sup> son of Barachias, whom ye slew

<sup>3</sup> Heb. xi. 37. <sup>4</sup> Rev. xviii. 24. <sup>5</sup> Gen. iv. 8. <sup>6</sup> 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.

35. *That upon you may come, &c.*

That is, the nation is guilty. Your fathers

were guilty. You have shown yourselves

to be like them. You are about, by

slaying the Messiah and his messengers,

to fill up the iniquity of the land. The

patience of God is exhausted; and the

nation is about to be visited with signal

vengeance. These national crimes de-

serve national judgments; and the proper

judgments for all these crimes are about

to come upon you in the destruction of

your temple and city. ¶ *All the right-*

*eous blood.* That is, all the judgments

due for shedding that blood. God did

not hold them guilty for what their fathers

did; but temporal judgments descend on

children in consequence of the wickedness

of parents, as in the case of drunken and

profligate parents. A drunken father

wastes the property that his children

might have possessed. A gambler re-

duces his children to poverty and want.

An imprudent and foolish parent is the

occasion of leading his sons into places of

poverty, ignorance, and crime, materially

affecting their character and destiny. See

Notes on Rom. v. 12—19. So of the

Jews. The appropriate effects of their

fathers' crimes were coming on the nation,

and they would suffer. ¶ *Upon the*

between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O <sup>1</sup> Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have ga-

<sup>1</sup> Jer. iv. 14; vi. 8. Luke xlii. 31. Rev. xi. 8.

thered <sup>2</sup> thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chicks under her wings, and ye would not see me henceforth, till ye say, <sup>4</sup> Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

thered <sup>2</sup> thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chicks under her wings, and ye would not see me henceforth, till ye say, <sup>4</sup> Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

38 Behold, your house is unto you desolate.<sup>3</sup>

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye say, <sup>4</sup> Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

<sup>2</sup> Dent. xxxii. 11, 12. Psa. xci. 4. <sup>3</sup> xi. 6. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xxi. 9. Psa. cxviii. 26.

REMARKS.

I. Proper respect should always be shown to teachers and rulers. Ver.

II. We are not to copy the example of wicked men. Ver. 3. We shall frame our conduct by the law of God, and not by the example of men.

III. Men are often very rigid in acting of others what they fail altogether of performing themselves. Ver. 4.

IV. We are to obey God, rather than man; not to seek human honours, nor to give flattering titles to others to allow others to give them to us, &c. Our highest honour is in humility; he is most exalted who is most lowly. Ver. 11, 12.

V. In the descriptions of the Scribes and Pharisees in this chapter, we have a full-length portrait of hypocrisy. 1. They shut up the kingdom of heaven against others. Ver. 13. They reject great pretensions to knowledge, but neither entered in themselves, nor showed others. 2. They committed the greatest iniquity under a cloak of religion.

14. They cheated widows out of their property, and made long prayers to their villainy. 3. They showed great gain in making proselytes; yet did it only for gain, and made them more wicked.

15. 4. They taught false doctrine, and contrivances to destroy the force of God's law, and shut out the Creator from their hearts. Ver. 16—22. 5. They were superstitious. Ver. 23. Small matters they were very scrupulous in; matters of real importance they cared little about. 6. They were of a hypocritical nature. They took great pains to appear well, while they themselves were full of deceit and falsehood. 25—28. 7. They professed great reverence for the memory of the pious

while at the same time they were

the Jews, though no account of his death is recorded. It might have been known by tradition. ¶ *Whom ye slew.* Whom you, Jews, slew. Whom your nation killed. ¶ *Between the temple and the altar.* Between the temple, properly so called, the sanctuary, and the altar of burnt offering in the court of the priests.

36. *Upon this generation.* The destruction of Jerusalem took place about forty years after this was spoken. See the next chapter.

37. *O Jerusalem, &c.* See Note, Luke xix. 41, 42. ¶ *Would I have gathered thee.* Would have protected and saved. ¶ *Thy children.* Thy people.

38. *Your house.* The temple. The house of worship of the Jews. The chief ornament of Jerusalem. ¶ *Desolate.* About to be desolate, or destroyed. To be forsaken as a place of worship and delivered into the hands of the Romans, and destroyed. See Notes on ch. xxiv.

39. *Ye shall not see me, &c.* The day of your mercy is gone by. I have offered you protection and salvation, and you have rejected it. You are about to crucify me, and your temple to be destroyed; and you, as a nation, be given up to long and dreadful suffering. You will not see me as a merciful Saviour, offering you redemption any more, till you have borne these heavy judgments. They must come upon you and be borne until you would be glad to hail a deliverer, and say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed be he that comes as the Messiah, to bring deliverance. This has not been yet accomplished, but the days will come when the Jews, long cast out and rejected, will hail Jesus as the Messiah, and receive him whom their fathers slew, as the merciful Saviour. Rom. xi. 25—32.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Signs of the fall of Jerusalem and of Christ's coming, 1—13. Directions to the disciples to flee, 14—20. Calamities of those times, 21—23. End of the world, 29—31. The prophecy sure, 32—35. Watchfulness taught, 37—51.*

**A**ND <sup>1</sup> Jesus went out, and departed from the temple : and

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiii. 1. Luke xxi. 5, 6.

saw that they really approved the conduct of those who killed them. Ver. 29—31. Never, perhaps, was there a combination of more wicked feelings and hypocritical actions, than among them ; and never was there more profound knowledge of the human heart, and more watchfulness, than in him who tore off his mask, and showed them what they were.

VI. It is amazing with what power and authority our blessed Lord reproves his wicked people. It is wonderful that they ever waited for a mock trial, and did not kill him at once. But his time was not come ; and they were restrained, and so suffered to act out the fury of their mad passions.

VII. Jesus pities dying sinners. Ver. 37. He seeks their salvation. He pleads with them to be saved. He would gather them to him, if they would come. The most hardened, even like the sinners of Jerusalem, he would save if they would come to him. But they will not. They turn from him, and tread the road to death.

VIII. The reason why the wicked are not saved, is their obstinacy. They choose not to be saved, and they die. If they will not come to Christ, it is right that they should die. If they do not come, they must die.

IX. The sinner shall be destroyed. Ver. 38. The day will come when the mercy of God will be clean gone for ever, and the forbearance of God exhausted ; and then the sinner must, must perish. When once God has given him over, he must die. No man, no parent, minister, or friend, no angel, or archangel, can then save. Salvation is lost, for ever lost. O how amazing is the folly of the wicked, that they weary out the forbearance of God, and perish in their sins !

his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them. See ye not all these things ? verily I say unto you, There <sup>2</sup> shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kin. ix. 7. Jer. xxvi. 18. Luke xix. 44.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Jesus foretels the destruction of the temple, as he takes his final leave of it, and teaches what were the signs of his coming. These predictions are also recorded in Mark xiii. Luke xxi. 5—33.

1. And Jesus went out. He was going over to the mount of Olives. Ver. 3. ¶ *The buildings of the temple.* The temple itself, with the surrounding courts, porches, and other edifices. See Note, ch. xxi. 12. Mark says, that they particularly pointed out the stones of the temple, as well as the buildings. "In that temple," says Josephus, the Jewish historian, "were several stones which were forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth ;" that is, more than seventy feet long, ten wide, and eight high. These stones, of such enormous size, were principally used in building the high wall on the east side, from the base to the top of the mountain. They were also, it is said, beautifully painted with variegated colours.

2. *There shall not be left here one stone upon another.* At the time this was spoken, no event was more improbable than this. The temple was vast, rich, splendid. It was the pride of the nation, and the nation was at peace. Yet in the short space of forty years all this was exactly accomplished. Jerusalem was taken by the Roman armies, under the command of Titus, A.D. 70. The account of the siege and destruction of the city is left us by Josephus, a historian of undoubted veracity and singular fidelity. He was a Jewish priest. In the wars of which he gives an account, he fell into the hands of the Romans, and remained with them during the siege and destruction of the city. Being a Jew, he would of course say nothing designed to confirm the prophecies of Jesus Christ.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount<sup>1</sup> of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiii. 10, 11, 36; xv. 12; xvii. 19; Mark xiii. 3, 4.

Yet his whole history appears almost like a running commentary on these predictions respecting the destruction of the temple. The following particulars are given on his authority.

After the city was taken, Josephus says, that Titus "gave orders that they should now demolish the whole city and temple, except three towers, which he reserved standing. But for the rest of the wall, it was laid so completely even with the ground by those who dug it up from the foundation, that there was nothing left, to make those believe who came hither that it had ever been inhabited." Maimonides, a Jewish writer, has also recorded that "Terentius Rufus, an officer in the army of Titus, with a ploughshare tore up the foundations of the temple," as if to fulfil the prophecy, "Zion shall be ploughed as a field." Mic. iii. 12. This was all done by the direction of divine providence. Titus was desirous of preserving the temple; and frequently sent Josephus to the Jews to induce them to surrender and save the temple and city. But the prediction of the Saviour had gone forth, and notwithstanding the wish of the Roman general, the temple was to be destroyed. The Jews themselves first set fire to the porticoes of the temple. One of the Roman soldiers, without any command, threw a burning firebrand into the golden window, and soon the temple was in flames. Titus gave orders to extinguish the fire; but amidst the tumult, none of his orders were obeyed. The soldiers pressed to the temple, and neither fear, nor entreaties, nor stripes, could restrain them. Their hatred of the Jews urged them on to the work of destruction, and thus, says Josephus, the temple was burnt against the will of Cæsar.—Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. iv. § 5, 6, 7.

3. *He sat upon the mount of Olives.* Note, ch. xxi. 1. From that mount there was a magnificent view of the whole city. ¶ *The disciples came unto him privately.*

coming, and of the end of the world?<sup>2</sup>

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. v. 1—10.   <sup>3</sup> Col. ii. 8.   <sup>2</sup> Them. ii. 3.

Not all of them, but Peter, James, John, and Andrew. Mark xiii. 3. The prediction that the temple would be destroyed, ver. 2, had been made in the presence of all the apostles. Some of them now came privately to know more particularly when this would be. ¶ *When shall these things be?* There are three questions here: 1. When those things should take place. 2. What should be the signs of his coming. 3. What should be the signs that the end of the world was near. To these questions Jesus replies in this and the following chapters. This he does, not by noticing them distinctly, but by intermingling the descriptions of the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the end of the world; so that it is sometimes difficult to tell to what particular subject his remarks apply. The principle on which this combined description of two events was given, appears to be, that they could be described in the same words, and, therefore, the accounts are intermingled. A similar use of language is found in some parts of Isaiah, where the same language will describe the return from the Babylonish captivity, and deliverance by the Messiah, and, therefore, was used by the prophet. See Introduction to Isaiah, § 7. ¶ *Sign of thy coming.* Evidence that thou art coming. By what token shall we know that thou art coming?

4, 5. *Take heed, &c.* He first gives them a caution to beware of deception. They were to be constantly on their guard, as many would arise to deceive the people. ¶ *Many shall come in my name.* Not in the name or by the authority of Jesus, but in the name of the Messiah, or claiming to be the Messiah. ¶ *I am Christ.* I am the Messiah. Note, ch. i. 1. The Messiah was expected at that time. Matt. ii. 1, 2. Many would lay claims to being the Messiah, and, as he was universally expected, many would easily be led to believe in them. There is abundant evidence that this was fully accomplished. Josephus informs us that

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Mount of Olives.*

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and deceive many.

And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

Many, who pretended to divine powers, deceived the people, leading them of them into the desert. "And," says he, "was overrun with seducers, and impostors, who people after them in multitudes of deserts, to see the signs which they promised to show of power of God." Among these were particularly Domitheus, the emperor, who affirmed that he was Simon Magus, who said he appointed among the Jews as the Son of David Theudas, who persuaded many to follow him to the river Jordan, to see if he could divide the waters. The names of twenty Messiahs are recorded as having appeared between the time of the emperor Nero and the year 1682.

Ye shall hear of wars, &c. It is recorded in the history of Rome, that violent agitations prevailed in an empire previous to the destruction of Jerusalem. Four emperors, Caligula, Otho, and Vitellius, suffered deaths, in the short space of a few months. In consequence of changes in the government, there were motions throughout the empire. Wars were formed; and bloody and cruel wars were the consequence of changes to the particular emperors. The more remarkable, as at the time the prophecy was uttered, the empire was in a state of peace. ¶ *Rumours of wars.* Wars declared, or threatened, not carried into execution. Tacitus says, that Bardanes, and after him, declared war against the emperor, it was not carried into execution. 34. He also says that Vitellius, of Syria, declared war against the king of Arabia, and wished to carry through Palestine, but the emperor Tiberius prevented the war. 5, 3. ¶ *The end is not yet.* The end of the Jewish economy; the destruction of Jerusalem will not immediately follow. Be not, therefore, alarmed, ye shall hear of those commotions.

troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against king-

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lx. 10—21. Ezek. xxi. 27. Hag. ii. 21, 22. Zech. xiv. 2, 3, 13.

Other signs will warn you when to be alarmed, and seek security.

7. Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. At Cæsarea, the Jews and Syrians contended about the right to the city, and twenty thousand of the Jews were slain. At this blow the whole nation of the Jews was exasperated, and carried war and desolation through the Syrian cities and villages. Sedition and civil war spread throughout Judea; Italy was also thrown into civil war by the contests between Otho and Vitellius for the crown. ¶ *And there shall be famines.* There was a famine foretold by Agabus, Acts xi. 28, which is mentioned as having occurred by Tacitus, Suetonius, and Eusebius; and which was so severe in Jerusalem. Josephus says, that many people perished for want of food. Ant. 20, 2. Four times in the reign of Claudius, A.D. 41—54, famine prevailed in Rome, Palestine, and Greece. ¶ *Pestilences.* Raging, epidemic diseases. The plague, sweeping off multitudes of people at once. It is commonly the attendant of famine, and often produced by it. A pestilence is recorded as raging in Babylonia, A.D. 40, Joseph. Ant. 18, 9, 8; in Italy, A.D. 66; Tacitus, 16, 13. Both of these took place before the destruction of Jerusalem. ¶ *Earthquakes.* In prophetic language earthquakes sometimes mean political commotions. Literally they are tremors or shakings of the earth and often shaking cities and towns to ruin. The earth opens, and houses and people sink indiscriminately to destruction. Many of these are mentioned as preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. Tacitus mentions one in the reign of Claudius, at Rome, and says that in the reign of Nero the cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse were overthrown; and the celebrated Pompeii was overwhelmed, and almost destroyed by an earthquake. Annals 15, 22. Others are mentioned as occurring at Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, and Samos. Luke adds, "And fearful sights, and great signs, shall

dom: and there shall be <sup>1</sup> famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi. 28. <sup>2</sup> Isa. ix. 12, 17, 21; x. 4. <sup>1</sup> Pet. iv. 17, 18.

there be from heaven." Ch. xxi. 11. Josephus, who had probably never heard of this prophecy, and who certainly would have done nothing designedly to show its fulfilment, records the prodigies and signs which he says preceded the destruction of the city. A star, says he, resembling a sword, stood over the city, and a comet that continued a whole year. At the feast of unleavened bread, during the night a bright light shone round the altar and the temple, so that it seemed to be bright day, for half an hour. The eastern gate of the temple, of solid brass, fastened with strong bolts and bars, and which had been shut with difficulty by twenty men, opened in the night of its own accord. A few days after that feast, he says, "before sunset, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armour were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities." A great noise, as of the sound of a multitude, was heard in the temple, saying, "Let us remove hence." Four years before the war began, Jesus, the son of Ananias, a plebeian and a husbandman, came to the feast of the tabernacles, when the city was in peace and prosperity, and began to cry aloud, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegroom and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!" He was scourged, and at every stroke of the whip he cried, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem." This cry, he says, was continued every day for more than seven years, till he was killed in the siege of the city, exclaiming, "Woe, woe to myself, also." Jewish Wars lib. vi. cap. v. § 3.

8. *The beginning of sorrows.* Far heavier calamities are yet to come before the end.

9. *To be afflicted.* By persecution, imprisonment, scourging, &c. ¶ *They shall deliver you up to councils.* (Mark.) To the great council, or sanhedrim; for this is the word in the original. Note,

9 Then <sup>3</sup> shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill <sup>4</sup> you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be <sup>5</sup> of-

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxi. 12. <sup>4</sup> John xvi. 2. Acts vii. 59. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiii. 21, 87.

Matt. v. 22. This was fulfilled when Peter and John were brought before the council Acts iv. 5-7. Mark further adds, ch. xiii. 9, that they should be delivered to synagogues and to prisons to be beaten, and should be brought before rulers and kings for his name's sake. All this was remarkably fulfilled. Peter and John were imprisoned, Acts iv. 3; Paul and Silas also, Acts xvi. 24. They were also beaten, Acts xvi. 23. Paul was brought before Gallio, Acts xviii. 12; before Felix, Acts xxiv. 24; and before Agrippa, Acts xxv. 23. ¶ *And shall kill you.* That is, shall kill some of you. Stephen was stoned, Acts vii. 59; James was killed by Herod, Acts xii. 2. And in addition to all that the sacred writers have told us, the persecution under Nero took place before the destruction of Jerusalem, in which were put to death, with many others, Peter and Paul. Most of the apostles, it is believed, died by persecution.

When they were delivered up, Jesus told them not to premeditate what they should say, for he would give them a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries could not gainsay or resist. Luke xxi. 14, 15. The fulfilment of this is recorded in the case of Stephen, Acts vi. 10, and of Paul, who made Felix tremble. Acts xxiv. 25. ¶ *Ye shall be hated of all nations.* This was fulfilled then, and has been in all ages. It was judged to be a crime to be a Christian. Multitudes for this, and for nothing else, were put to death. ¶ *For my name's sake.* On account of attachment to me; or because you bear my name as Christians.

10. *Many shall be offended.* See Note ch. v. 22. Many shall stumble, fall, apostatize, from a profession of religion. Many who professed to love me, shall then show that they had no real attachment to me; and in those trying times shall show that they knew nothing of genuine Christian love. See 1 J hn ii. 19. ¶ *Shall betray one another.* Those who thus apostatize from professed attachment to me shall be-

fended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And <sup>1</sup> many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive <sup>2</sup> many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax <sup>3</sup> cold.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 John. iv. 3. <sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 1. <sup>3</sup> Rev. iii. 15, 16.

tray others who really love me. This they would do to secure their own safety, by revealing the names, habitations, or places of concealment of others. ¶ *¶ Shall hate one another.* Not that real Christians would do this, but those who had professed to be such, would then show that they were not, and would hate one another. Luke adds, that they should be betrayed "by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends." They would break over the most tender ties to surrender Christians to punishment. So great would be their hatred of Christianity, that it would overcome all the natural endearments of kindred and home. This, in the persecutions of Christians, has been often done; and nothing shows more fully the deep and deadly hatred of the human heart to the gospel.

11. *And many false prophets.* Many men pretending to be prophets, or foretellers of future events. This refers not to the false Messiahs of which he had spoken, ch. v. 5, but to prophets who should appear during the siege of the city. Of them Josephus says: "The tyrannical zealots who ruled the city suborned many false prophets to declare that aid would be given to the people from heaven. This was done to prevent them from attempting to desert, and to inspire confidence in God." See Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. 5, § 2 3.

12. *And because iniquity, &c.* The word *iniquity* here seems to include the cruelty of the Jews and Romans in their persecutions; the betraying of Christians by those who professed to be such; and the pernicious errors of false prophets and others. The effect of all this would be, that the ardour of feeling of many Christians would be lessened. The word *war* means to become. It is an old Saxon word, not used now in this sense, except in the Bible. *The fear of death,*

13 But <sup>4</sup> he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be <sup>5</sup> preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. ii. 10. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xxviii. 18. Rom. x. 18. Rev. xiv. 6.

and the deluding influence of false teachers, would lessen the zeal of many timid and weak professors; perhaps also of many real, but feeble Christians.

13. *He that shall endure unto the end—shall be saved.* The word *end* here has by some been thought to mean the destruction of Jerusalem, or the end of the Jewish economy. And the meaning has been supposed to be: he that perseveres in bearing these persecutions to the end of the war, shall be safe. God will protect his people from harm, so that not a hair of the head shall perish. Others, with more probability, have referred this to final salvation, and refer the *end* to the close of life. He that bears afflictions and persecutions faithfully, that constantly adheres to his religion, and does not shrink till death, shall be saved, or shall enter heaven. So Luke, ch. xxi. 18, says, "there should not be a hair of the head perish;" i. e., they should be saved." A hair of the head, or the smallest part or portion, is a proverbial expression, denoting the certainty and completeness of their salvation. Luke farther adds, ch. xxi. 19, "In your patience possess ye your souls." That is, keep your souls patient; keep proper possession of patience as your own. It is a part of religion to teach it; and in these trying times let it not depart from you.

14. *And this gospel—shall be preached in all the world.* The evidence that this was done is to be chiefly derived from the New Testament, and there it is clear. Thus Paul declares that it was preached to every creature under heaven, Col. i. 6, 23; that the faith of the Romans was spoken of throughout the whole world, Rom. i. 8; that he preached in Arabia, Gal. i. 17; and at Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, Rom. xv. 19. We know also that he travelled through Asia



15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken <sup>1</sup> of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand :) <sup>2</sup>

16 Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains :

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ix. 27 ; xii. 11. <sup>2</sup> Ezek. xl. 4. Dan. x. 12—14. Heb. ii. 1.

Minor, Greece, and Crete ; that he was in Italy, and probably in Spain and Gaul. Rom. xv. 24—28. At the same time, the other apostles were not idle ; and there is full proof that within thirty years after this prophecy was spoken, churches were established in all these regions. ¶ *For a witness unto all nations.* This preaching the gospel indiscriminately to all the Gentiles, shall be a proof to them, or a witness, that the division between the Jews and Gentiles was about to be broken down. Hitherto the blessings of revelation had been confined to the Jews. They were the peculiar people of God. His messages had been sent to them only. When, therefore, God sent the gospel to all other people, it was proof, or a witness unto them, that the peculiar jewish economy was at an end. ¶ *Then shall the end come.* The end of the jewish economy. The destruction of the temple and city.

15. *The abomination of desolation.* This is a Hebrew expression, meaning an abominable or hateful destroyer. The Gentiles were all held in abomination by the Jews. Acts x. 28. *The abomination of desolation* means the Roman army ; and is so explained by Luke xxi. 20. The Roman army is further called the abomination, on account of the images of the emperor and the eagles, carried in front of the legions, and regarded by the Romans with divine honours. ¶ *Spoken of by Daniel the prophet.* Dan. ix. 26, 27 ; xi. 31 ; xii. 11. ¶ *Standing in the holy place.* Mark says, "standing where it ought not," meaning the same thing. All Jerusalem was esteemed holy. Matt. iv. 5. The meaning of this is, when you see the Roman armies standing in the holy city, or encamped around the temple, or the Roman ensigns or standards in the temple. Josephus farther relates, that when the city was taken, the Romans

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house : <sup>3</sup>

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And <sup>4</sup> woe unto them that

<sup>3</sup> Job ii. 4. Prov. vi. 4, 5. Luke xvii. 31—33. <sup>4</sup> Luke xxiii. 29.

brought their idols into the temple, and placed them over the eastern gate, and sacrificed to them there. Jewish War, lib. vi. cap. 6, § 1. ¶ *Whoso readeth, &c.* This seems to be a remark made by the evangelist, to direct the attention of the reader particularly to the meaning of the prophecy by Daniel.

16. *Then let them, &c.* Then Christians may know that the end is come, and should seek a place of safety. Destruction would not only visit the city, but would extend to the surrounding part of Judea. ¶ *The mountains.* The mountains of Palestine abound in caves, a safe retreat for those pursued. In all ages these caves were the favourite places of robbers ; and were also resorted to by those in danger. 1 Sam. xiii. 6 ; xxii. 1. 2 Sam. xxiii. 13. Josh. x. 16. In those mountains they would be safe.

17. *Him which is on the housetop.* The roofs of the houses in eastern countries were made flat, so that they were favourable places for walking and retirement. See Note, Matt. ix. 2. The meaning here is, that he who should be on the house top when this calamity came upon the city, should flee without delay ; he should not even take time to secure any article of apparel from his house. So sudden would be the calamity, that by doing thus he would endanger his life.

18. *Return back to take his clothes.* His clothes which, in working, he had laid aside ; or which in fleeing he should throw off as an encumbrance. *Clothes* here mean the outer garment, commonly laid aside when men worked or ran. See Note, ch. v. 40.

These directions were followed. It is said that the Christians, warned by these predictions, fled from the city to Pella, and other places beyond Jordan ; so that there is not evidence that a single Christian

are with child, <sup>1</sup> and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. xv. 16. Lam. iv. 3, 4, 10.

perished in Jerusalem. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. cap. 6.

20. *But pray ye, &c.* The destruction was certainly coming. It could not be prevented. Yet it was right to pray for a mitigation of the circumstances, that it might be as mild as possible. So we know that calamity is before us; sickness, pain, and bereavement, and death, are in our path; yet though we know that these things must come upon us, it is right to pray that they may come in as mild a manner as may be consistent with the will of God. We must die; but it is right to pray that the pains of our dying may be neither long nor severe. ¶ *In the winter.* On account of the cold, storms, &c. To be turned then from home, and compelled to take up an abode in caverns, would be a double calamity. ¶ *Neither on the sabbath day.* Journeys were prohibited by the law on the sabbath. Exod. xvi. 29. The law of Moses did not mention the distance to which persons might go on the sabbath; but most of the Jews maintained that it should not be more than two thousand cubits. Some supposed that it was seven furlongs, or nearly a mile. This distance was allowed, in order that they might go to their places of worship. Most of them held that it was not lawful to go farther, under any circumstances of war or affliction. Jesus teaches them to pray that their flight might not be on the sabbath, because if they should not go farther than a sabbath day's journey, they would not be beyond the reach of danger; and if they did, they would be exposed to the charge of violating the law. It should be added, that it was almost impracticable to travel in Judea on that day, as the gates of the cities were usually closed. Neh. xiii. 19—22.

21. *There shall be great tribulation.* The word *tribulation* means calamity, or suffering. Luke, ch. xxi. 24, has specified in what this tribulation should consist. "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled." That is,

be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day : <sup>2</sup>

21 For <sup>3</sup> then shall be great tri-

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xvi. 29. <sup>3</sup> Dan. xii. 1.

until the time allotted for the Gentiles to occasion these calamities shall be fully accomplished; or as long as God is pleased to suffer them to do it.

The first thing mentioned by Luke is, that they should fall by the edge of the sword. That is, should be slain in war, as the sword was then principally used in war. This was most strikingly fulfilled. Josephus, in describing it, uses almost the very words of our Saviour. All the calamities, says he, which had befallen any nation from the beginning of the world, were but small in comparison with those of the Jews. Jewish Wars, lib. i. pref. § 4.

He has given the following account of one part of the massacre when the city was taken. "And now rushing into the city, they slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burnt the houses and all the people who had fled into them. And when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcases destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city run with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood." Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. 8, § 5; cap. 9, § 2, 3. He adds, that in the siege of Jerusalem, not fewer than eleven hundred thousand perished, Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. 9, § 3, a number nearly half as great as are in the whole city of London. In the adjacent provinces no fewer than two hundred and fifty thousand are reckoned to have been slain; making in all whose deaths were ascertained, the almost incredible number of one million three hundred and fifty thousand, who were put to death. These were not indeed all slain with the sword. Many were crucified. "Many hundreds," says he, Jewish Wars, lib. v. cap. xi. § 1, "were first whipped, then tormented with various kinds of tortures, and finally crucified: the Roman soldiers

bulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.<sup>1</sup>

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh

<sup>1</sup> Joel ii. 2. Mal. iv. 1.

nailing them, out of the wrath and hatred they bore to the Jews, one after one way, and another after another, to crosses, by way of jest, until at length the multitude became so great that room was wanting for crosses, and crosses for the bodies." So terribly was their imprecation fulfilled "His blood be on us and on our children." Ch. xxvii. 25. If it be asked how it was possible for so many people to be slain in a single city, it is answered, that the siege of Jerusalem commenced during the time of the pass-over, when all the males of the Jews were required to be there, and when it is estimated that more than three millions were usually assembled. See Josephus, Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. ix. § 3, 4.

A horrible instance of the distress of Jerusalem is related by Josephus. The famine during the siege became so great that they ate what the most sordid animals refused to touch. A woman of distinguished rank, having been plundered by the soldiers, in hunger, rage, and despair, killed and roasted her babe, and had eaten one half of him before the deed was discovered. Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. 3, § 3, 4. This cruel and dreadful act was also in fulfilment of prophecy. Deut. xxviii. 53, 56, 57.

Another thing added by Luke, ch. xxi. 24, was, that "they should be led captive into all nations." Josephus informs us that the captives taken during the whole war amounted to ninety-seven thousand. The tall and handsome young men Titus reserved for triumph; of the rest, many were distributed through the Roman provinces, to be destroyed by wild beasts in theatres; many were sent to the works in Egypt; many, especially those under seventeen years of age, were sold for slaves. Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. 9, § 2, 3.

22. *Except those days should be shortened.* If the calamities of the siege should be lengthened out. If famine and war should be suffered to rage. "No flesh be saved." None of the nations would be preserved alive. All the inhabitants of

be saved: but <sup>2</sup> for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened

23 Then <sup>3</sup> if any man shall say unto you. Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lxx. 8, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xlii. 1—3.

Judea would perish. The war, famine, and pestilence, would entirely destroy them. "¶ But for the elect's sake. The elect here doubtless means Christians. See Rom. i. 7. Eph. i. 4. 1 Thess. i. 4. 1 Pet. i. 2. The word *elect* means to choose. It is given to Christians because they are chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 1 Pet. i. 2. It is probable that in Jerusalem and the adjacent parts of Judea, there were many who were true followers of Christ. On their account, to preserve them alive, and to make them the instruments of spreading the gospel, Christ said those days should not be lengthened out, and suffered to produce their destruction. It is related by Josephus, Jewish Wars, lib. i. cap. 12, § 1, that Titus at first resolved to reduce the city by famine. He therefore built a wall around it, to keep any provisions from being carried in, and any of the people from going out. The Jews, however, drew up their army near the walls, engaged in battle, and the Romans pursued them, provoked by their attempts, and broke into the city. The affairs of Rome also at that time demanded the presence of Titus there; and contrary to his original intention, he pressed the siege, and took the city by storm, thus shortening the time that would have been occupied in reducing it by famine. This was for the benefit of the elect. So the designs of wicked men, intended by them for the destruction of the people of God, are intended by God for the good of his chosen people. See Isa. x. 7, and my Notes on that verse.

23. *Lo, here is Christ.* The Messiah. The Jews expected the Messiah to deliver them from Roman oppression. In the time of these great calamities they would anxiously look for him. Many would claim to be the Messiah. Many would follow them. Many would rejoice to believe that he was come, and would call on others, Christians with the rest, to fol-

24 For<sup>1</sup> there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and<sup>2</sup> shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if<sup>3</sup> it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 5, 11. <sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. II 8—11. Rev. xlii. 2. <sup>3</sup> John x. 28, 29.

ow them. ¶ *Believe it not.* You have evidence that the Messiah has come, and you are not to be deceived by the plausible pretensions of others.

24. *False Christs.* Persons claiming to be the Messiah. ¶ *False prophets.* Persons claiming to be the prophet spoken of by Moses, Deut. xviii. 15; or persons pretending to declare the way of deliverance from the Romans, and calling the people to follow them. See ver. 5. ¶ *Shall show great signs and wonders.* That is, shall pretend to work miracles. Shall so nearly resemble prophets in their miraculous power, as to render it difficult to detect the imposture. Josephus represents the false Christs and prophets that appeared, magicians and sorcerers. He says they led the people out into the deserts, and promised to work miracles to deliver them. Ant. lib. xx. cap. 6, § 6. *If possible, would deceive, &c.* So nearly would their pretended miracles resemble true miracles, as to render it difficult to detect the imposture; and so much so that if it were possible they would persuade even true Christians that they were the Messiah. But that was not possible. They would be too firmly established in the belief that Jesus was the Christ, to be wholly led away by others. Christians may be sometimes led far astray; they may be in doubt about some great doctrines of religion; they may be perplexed by the craft and cunning artifices of those who do not love the truth, but they cannot be wholly deceived, and seduced from the Saviour. Our Saviour says that if this were possible, it would be done then. But it was not possible.

25. *Behold, &c.* Mark adds, ch. xiii. 3, "take ye heed." The reason why he told them before, was that they might be on their guard, and be prepared for those calamities.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

27 For as the lightning<sup>4</sup> cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

<sup>4</sup> Zech. ix. 14. Luke xvii. 24—37.

26. *Behold, he is in the desert.* The Jews had formed the expectation that the Messiah would appear suddenly, from some unexpected quarter. Hence many would be looking to the desert places, expecting that he would come from them. Accordingly, most of the impostors and pretended prophets led their people into the deserts. ¶ *Go not forth.* Do not follow them. They will only deceive you. ¶ *In secret chambers.* Concealed in some house, or some retired part of the city. Many would, doubtless, pretend that the Messiah was concealed there, and either for the purpose of encouraging or deceiving the people, would pretend that they had discovered him.

27. *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, &c.* This is not designed to denote the quarter from which he would come, but the manner. He does not mean to affirm that the Son of man will come from the east, but that he will come in a rapid and unexpected manner, like the lightning. Many would be looking for him in the desert, many in secret places. But he said it would be useless to be looking in that manner. It was useless to look to any particular part of the heavens to know where the lightning would next flash. In a moment it would blaze in an unexpected part of the heavens, and shine at once to the other part. So rapidly, so unexpectedly, in so unlooked for a quarter would be his coming. See Luke x. 18. Zech. ix. 14. ¶ *The coming of the Son of man.* It has been doubted whether this refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, or to the coming at the day of judgment. For the solution of this doubt, let it be remarked: 1. That those two events are the principal scenes in which our Lord said he would come, either in person or in judgment. 2. That the destruction of Jerusalem is described as his

28 For<sup>1</sup> wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.<sup>2</sup>

29 ¶ Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall<sup>3</sup> the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxix. 30. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xxviii. 49. Amos ix. 1-4. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xlii. 10. Ezek. xxxii. 7. Amos v. 20. Acts ii. 20. Rev. vi. 12.

coming, his act for their great crimes. 3. That these events, the judgment of Jerusalem and the final judgment, in many respects greatly resemble each other. 4. That they will bear, therefore, to be described in the same language. And, 5. Therefore, that the same words often include both events, as properly described by them. The words, therefore, had doubtless a primary reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, but such an amplitude of meaning as also to express his coming to judgment. See my Introduction to Isaiah, § 7, 3.

28. *Wheresoever*, &c. The words in this verse are proverbial. Vultures and eagles easily ascertain where dead bodies are, and come to devour them. So with the Roman army. Jerusalem is like a dead and putrid corpse. Its life is gone, and it is ready to be devoured. The Roman armies will find it out, as the vultures do a dead carcass, and will come around it to devour it. This proverb also teaches a universal truth. Wherever wicked men are, there will be assembled the instruments of their chastisement. The providence of God will direct them there, as the eagles are directed to a dead carcass.

This verse is connected with the preceding by the word *for*, implying that this is a reason for what is said there, that the Son of man would certainly come to destroy the city, and that he would come suddenly. The meaning is, he would come by means of the Roman armies, as certainly, as suddenly, and as unexpectedly, as whole flocks of vultures and eagles, though unseen before, suddenly find their prey, see it at a great distance, and gather in multitudes around it. Travellers in the deserts of Arabia tell us that they sometimes witness a speck in the distant sky, which for a long time is

stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens<sup>4</sup> shall be shaken :

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man<sup>5</sup> in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and<sup>6</sup> they shall see the Son of man coming in the

<sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 10. <sup>5</sup> Dan. vii. 13. Rev. i. 7. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xvi. 27. Mark xiii. 26. Luke xxii. 62.

scarcely visible. At length it grows larger, it comes nearer, and they at last find that it is a vulture that has from an immense distance seen a carcass lying on the sand. So keen is their vision, and so aptly does this represent the Roman armies, though at an immense distance, yet spying, as it were, Jerusalem, a putrid carcass, and hastening in multitudes to destroy it.

29. *Shall the sun be darkened*, &c. The images here used, are not to be taken literally. They are often used by the sacred writers to denote any great calamities. As the darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars would be an inexpressible calamity, so any great catastrophe, any overturning of kingdoms or cities, or dethroning of kings and princes, is represented by the darkening of the sun and moon, and by some terrible convulsion in the elements. Thus the destruction of Babylon is foretold in similar terms, Isa. xlii. 10; and of Tyre, Isa. xxiv. 23. The slaughter in Bozrah and Idumea is predicted in the same language, Isa. xxxiv. 4. See also Isa. i. 3; lx. 19, 20. Ezek. xxxii. 7. Joel iii. 13. To the description in Matthew, Luke has added, ch. xxi. 25, "there should be distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth." All these are figures of great and terrible calamity. The roaring of the waves of the sea denotes great tumult and affliction among the people. Perplexity means doubt, anxiety, not knowing what to do to escape. Men's hearts should fail them for fear, or by reason of fear. Their fears would be so great as to take away their courage and strength.

30. *The sign of the Son of man*. The evidence that Christ is coming to destroy

clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound <sup>2</sup> of a trumpet, *r. with a trumpet and a great voice.* <sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. 16.

city of Jerusalem. It is not to be noted, however, that this description is applicable also to his coming at the day of judgment. The disciples had asked *n. ver. 3*, what should be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world. In his answer, he has reference to both events, and his language may be regarded as descriptive of both. At the destruction of Jerusalem, the sign or evidence of his coming was found in the fulfilment of these predictions. At the end of the world, the sign of his coming will be his personal approach with the glory of his angels and the holy angels. Matt. xxvi. 1. Luke xxi. 27. Acts i. 11. 1 Thess. 16. ¶ *All the tribes of the earth mourn.* His is, either all the tribes or people of the land of Judea shall mourn at the great calamities coming upon them, or all the nations of the world shall wail when he comes to judgment. All the wicked shall mourn at the prospect of their doom. Lev. i. 7. The cause of their wailing at the day of judgment shall be chiefly that they have pierced, killed, rejected the Saviour, and that they deserve the condemnation that is coming upon them. Zech. xii. 10. John xix. 37. ¶ *And they shall see the Son of man.* The Lord Jesus coming to judgment. Probably this refers more directly to his coming at the last day, though it may also mean that the evidence of his coming to destroy Jerusalem shall then be seen. ¶ *In the clouds of heaven.* He ascended in a cloud. Acts i. 9. He shall return in like manner. Acts i. 11. *The clouds of heaven* denote not the clouds in heaven, but the clouds that appear to shut heaven, or the sky, from our view. ¶ *With power.* Power, manifest in the destruction of Jerusalem, by the wonders that preceded it, and by the overturning of the temple and city. In the day of judgment, power manifest by consuming the material world, 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 12; by raising the dead, John v. 29, 30, 1 Cor. xv. 52; by changing those who may be alive when he shall come; that is, making their bodies like

and they shall gather together his elect <sup>3</sup> from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. xl. 2; xlix. 18. Zech. xiv. 5.

those who have died, and been raised up, 1 Cor. xv. 52, 1 Thess. iv. 17; by bringing the affairs of the world to a close, receiving the righteous to heaven, Matt. xxv. 34, 1 Cor. xxv. 57; and by sending the wicked, however numerous or however strong, down to hell. Matt. xxv. 41, 46. John v. 29. ¶ *Great glory.* The word *glory* here means the visible display of his honour and majesty. This glory will be manifested by the manner of his coming, Matt. xxvi. 64; by the presence of the angels, Matt. xxv. 31; and by the wonders that shall attend him down the sky.

31. *And he shall send his angels.* Angels signify literally messengers. Luke vii. 24; ix. 52. The word is often applied to inanimate objects, or to any thing that God employs to rescue his people from danger. Psa. civ. 4. But it most commonly refers to the race of intelligences more exalted than man, who are employed often in the work of man's rescue from ruin, and in his salvation. Heb. i. 14. In either of these senses, it might here refer to deliverance granted to the people of God in the calamities of Jerusalem. It is said that there is reason to believe that not one Christian perished in the destruction of that city, God having in various ways secured their escape, so that they fled to Pella, where they dwelt when the city was destroyed. But the language seems to refer rather to the end of the world; and no doubt its principal application was intended to be to the gathering of his elect, at the day of judgment. ¶ *With a great sound of a trumpet.* The Jewish assemblies used to be called together by the sound of a trumpet, as ours often are by bells. Lev. xxv. 9. Num. x. 2. Judg. iii. 27. Hence when they spoke of convening an assembly, they spoke also of doing it by sounding a trumpet. Our Saviour speaking to Jews, used language to which they were accustomed, and described the assembling of the people at the last day, in language which they were accustomed to use in calling assemblies together. It is

32 Now <sup>1</sup> learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxi. 29.

not certain, however, that he meant that this would be literally so, but only to indicate the certainty that the world would be assembled together. Similar language is often used, when speaking of the judgment. 1 Cor. xv. 52. 1 Thess. iv. 16. A trumpet, or trumpet, was a wind instrument, made at first of the horns of oxen, and afterwards of ram's horns, cut off at the smaller extremity. In some instances it was made of brass, in the form of a horn. The common trumpet was straight, made of brass or silver, a cubit in length, the larger extremity shaped so as to resemble a small bell. In times of peace, in assembling the people, this was sounded softly. In times of calamity, or war, or any great commotion, it was sounded loud. Perhaps this was referred to when our Saviour said, with a great sound of a trumpet. ¶ *They shall gather together his elect.* See Note on ver. 22. The word means Christians; the chosen of God. If this refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, it means, God shall send forth his messengers, whatever he may choose to employ for that purpose, signs, wonders, human messengers, or the angels themselves, and gather Christians into a place of safety, so that they shall not be destroyed with the Jews. If it refers to the last judgment, as it doubtless in a primary or secondary sense does, then it means that he will send his angels to gather his chosen, his elect, together from all places. Matt. xiii. 39, 41—43. This shall be done before the living shall be changed. 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. ¶ *From the four winds.* That is, from the four quarters of the globe: east, west north, and south. The Jews expressed those quarters by the winds blowing from them. See Ezek. xxxvii. 9. See also Isa. xliii. 5, 6. ¶ *From one end of heaven, &c.* Mark says, ch. xiii. 27, "from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of heaven." The expression denotes that they shall be

sec all these things, know that <sup>2</sup> it is near, *even* <sup>3</sup> at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you. This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *He*. <sup>3</sup> Jas. v. 8.

gathered from all parts of the earth where they are scattered. The word *heaven* is here used to denote the visible heavens or the sky, meaning that through the whole world he would gather them. See Deut. iv. 32. Psa. xix. 1—6.

32. *Now learn a parable.* See Note, ch. xiii. 3. The word here means rather an illustration. Make a comparison, or judge of this as you do respecting a fig-tree. ¶ *Fig tree.* This was spoken on the mount of Olives, which produced not only olives, but figs. Possibly one was near when he spoke this. ¶ *When his branch, &c.* When the juices return from the roots into the branches, and the buds swell and burst, as if tender, and too feeble to contain the pressing and expanding leaves. When you see that, you judge that spring and summer are near.

33. *So likewise ye, &c.* In the same manner, when you see what I have predicted, the signs around Jerusalem, then know that its destruction is at hand. ¶ *Is near.* Luke says, ch. xxi. 23, 31, "that your redemption draweth nigh," and "the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Your deliverance from the dangers that threaten the city approaches, and the kingdom of God will be set up in the earth; or your everlasting redemption from sin and death will come at the day of judgment, and his eternal kingdom is to be established in the heavens.

34. *This generation, &c.* This age; this race of men. A generation is about thirty or forty years. The destruction of Jerusalem took place about forty years after this was spoken. See Note, ch. xvi. 28. ¶ *Till all these things, &c.* Till these things shall receive a full accomplishment. Till events shall take place that shall be a complete fulfilment, if there were nothing further intended. He does not mean to exclude here the reference to the judgment, but to say that the destruction of Jerusalem would be such as to make appropriate the words of

35 Heaven <sup>1</sup> and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 ¶ But <sup>2</sup> of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving

<sup>1</sup> Isa. ciii. 26; Isa. li. 6.    <sup>2</sup> Zech. xiv. 7.   
 *Thom. v. 2.*

in prediction, were there nothing beyond. When death was threatened to Adam, the propriety of the threatening would have been seen, and the threatening could have been fulfilled, had men suffered only temporal death. At the same time, the threatening had a fulness of meaning, that would cover also, and justify, eternal death in hell. Thus the words of Christ, describing the destruction of Jerusalem, had a fulness of significance that would meet also the events of the judgment, and whose meaning would be filled up till the world was closed.

35. *Heaven and earth shall pass away,* &c. You may sooner expect to see the heaven and earth pass away, and return to nothing, than my words to fail.

36. *But of that day and hour.* Of the precise time of the fulfilment. The general signs of its coming have been given, as the budding of the fig-tree is a certain indication that summer is near. But the precise time is not indicated by these things. One part of their inquiry, ver. 3, was when these things should be. He now replies to them, by saying that he precise time would not be foretold. ¶ *Knoweth no man, no, not the angels.* See Note on Mark xiii. 32.

37. *Noe.* The Greek way of writing Noah. See Gen. vi., vii., viii., ix. The coming of the Son of man would be as it was in the days of Noah: 1. In its being sudden and unexpected, the precise time not being made known, though the general indications had been given. 2. The world would be found as it was then.

38. *For as in the days,* &c. The things mentioned here denote attention

in marriage, until<sup>3</sup> the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. vi. 2.    1 Sam. xxv. 36—38; xxx. 16, 17.    *Pan. v. 1—4, 30.*

to the affairs of this life, rather than to what was coming on them. It does not mean that these things were wrong, but only that such was their actual employment, and that they were regardless of what was coming upon them.

39. *They knew not.* That is, they knew not the exact time, until it came upon them. So, says he, it shall be when the Son of man shall come. They shall not know the precise time until he comes, and then they shall be found engaged in the ordinary business of life unconcerned.

40. *Then shall two be in the field,* &c. The calamity shall come suddenly. There shall be no escape for those whom it overtakes. ¶ *One shall be taken.* The word *taken* may mean, either to be taken away from the danger, i. e., rescued, as Lot was, Luke xvii. 28, 29, or to be taken away by death. Probably the latter is the meaning.

41. *Two women,* &c. Grinding in the east was performed, as it is now, chiefly by hand. The mill-stones were about two feet in diameter, and half a foot in thickness. The lower one was fixed, and the upper one was turned by a handle, or crank. This was done by two persons, who sat opposite to each other. One took hold of the mill-handle, and turned it half way round; the other then seized it and completed the revolution. This was done by women; by servants of the lowest order; and was a very laborious employment. See Exod. xi. 5. Judg. xvi. 21. Job xxxi. 10. Isa. xlvii. 2. The meaning of this verse is similar to the former. Of two persons sitting near to each other, one shall be taken, and the



42 ¶ Watch <sup>1</sup> therefore : for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good-man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready :

<sup>1</sup> Luke xli. 39, 40. Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15.

other left. The calamity would be sudden, and would come upon them before they were aware.

42. *Watch.* Be looking for his coming. Be expecting it as near; as a great event; as coming in an unexpected manner. Watch the signs of his coming, and be ready.

43. *But know this, &c.* If a man knew the hour, or about the hour, when a robber would come, he would be ready for him. So you know not the exact hour, but you know it is near, when the Son of man will come. He will come suddenly, as a thief comes, without giving previous warning. 1 Thess. v. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 10. Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15. ¶ *Good man.* See Note, ch. xx. 11. *Thief.* A *thief*, with us, means one who takes goods without doing violence; secretly, silently. The original word means one who does it by house-breaking, or by highway violence. Luke x. 30. ¶ *Broken up.* Broken into, either by the doors or windows. ¶ *In what watch.* In which of the four quarters of the night. See Note, ch. xiv. 25.

44. *Be ye also ready.* Luke, ch. xxi. 36, says that he charged them to pray always, that they might be accounted worthy to escape those things, the judgments coming upon the wicked, and to stand before the Son of man; i. e., to stand there approved by him, or admitted to his favour. Christ also charged them, Luke xxi. 34, to take heed and not to suffer their hearts to be overcharged with surfeiting, or too much eating, or drunkenness, or the cares of this life, lest that day should come upon them unawares; things improper if there were no judgment; peculiarly mad and wicked when the judgment is near.

for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. <sup>2</sup>

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them <sup>3</sup> meat in due season? <sup>4</sup>

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xxv. 10, 13. Phil. iv. 5. Jas. v. 8.  
<sup>3</sup> Jer. iii. 15. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xiii. 52.

45—51. This passage is in fact a parable, though it is not expressly so called. The design is to show that his disciples should act as if they were each moment expecting his return. This he illustrates by the conduct of a servant who did not expect his master soon to return, who acted with great impropriety, and who was accordingly punished.

45. *Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant, &c.* By the conduct of a faithful and wise servant he intends to denote a faithful Christian, a servant of God, or a teacher of religion. ¶ *Whom his lord.* His master. It has no reference to God. It means the lord or master of the servant. Applied to Christian teachers, in the spiritual meaning of the parable, it refers to Christ, who has appointed them as teachers, and who is their Lord and Master. John xiii. 13, 14. ¶ *Over his household.* His family. Christian ministers are the servants of God appointed over the church, the family of Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 5; iv. 1, 2; xii. 28. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. ¶ *Meat in due season.* The word *meat* here means food of all kinds. When the Bible was translated into English, it included, as the original does, all kinds of provisions requisite to support and nourish life. ¶ *In due season.* At the proper time. As they need it, or in the accustomed times. This was the office of a steward. Among the ancients this office was often filled by a slave, one who had shown himself trusty and faithful. The duty was to have a general superintendence over the affairs of the family. Applied to Christian ministers, it means that they are to feed the flock of God, to minister to their wants, and to do it as they need it. John xxi. 15—17. Acts xx. 28. 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler<sup>1</sup> over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day<sup>2</sup> when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxv. 21. <sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. v. 3. Rev. iii. 3.

47. *Shall make him ruler, &c.* Shall confirm his appointment over his household, and, as a reward, shall place him over all his property. This does not mean that ministers shall have a higher rank or office, but is a circumstance of the parable or story, designed to show the effect of faithfulness. Faithful servants of Christ shall be rewarded. This will be done by his approbation, and by the rewards of the heavenly world.

48. *That evil servant.* If that servant so appointed, having this office, should be evil or wicked. ¶ *Say in his heart.* Secretly suppose. ¶ *Delayeth his coming.* Will not return in a long time; or does not return as soon as was expected, and perhaps may not at all.

49. *Smite his fellow-servants, &c.* This is the conduct of a wicked servant, who supposing he would not be called to account, and abusing his authority, gave himself up to oppressing, carousing, and debauchery. It is designed to represent the conduct of ministers who are unfaithful, overhearing, and who abuse their trust in the church.

51. *Shall cut him asunder.* This kind of punishment was anciently practised. Sometimes it was done by the sword, sometimes by saws. It was practised among the Chaldeans, Dan. ii. 5, iii. 29; and among the Hebrews, 1 Sam. xv. 33. 2 Sam. xii. 31. Heb. xi. 37. It was also practised by the Egyptians and Romans. It is not, perhaps, here, to be taken literally, but signifies that the wicked servant should be severely punished. ¶ *Hypocrites.* See Note ch. vi. 2.

51 And shall<sup>3</sup> cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there<sup>4</sup> shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*Parables; of the ten virgins, 1—13, and of the servants with talents, 14—30. Parabolic description of the last judgment, 31—46.*

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins,<sup>5</sup> which took their lamps,

<sup>3</sup> Or, cut him off. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xxv. 30. <sup>5</sup> Psa. xlv. 14. 2 Cor. xi. 2.

They are spoken of here as the worst of men. ¶ *Weeping and gnashing of teeth.* See Note, ch. viii. 12. The unfaithful and wicked minister of God, who lives without expectation or fear of judgment, shall suffer the severest punishment inflicted on sinners in the world of woe.

## CHAPTER XXV.

1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven.* See Note, chap. iii. 2. The phrase here refers to Christ's coming in the day of judgment. ¶ *Shall be likened.* Or shall resemble. The meaning is, when the Son of man returns to judgment, it shall be as it was in the case of ten virgins in a marriage ceremony. The coming of Christ to receive his people to himself is often represented under the similitude of a marriage, the church being represented as his spouse or bride. The marriage relation is the most tender, firm, and endearing, of any known on earth, and on this account it fitly represents the union of believers to Christ. See ch. ix. 15; John iii. 29; Eph. v. 25—32; Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 9. ¶ *Ten virgins.* These virgins, doubtless, represent the church—a name given to it because it is pure and holy. See Lam. i. 15; ii. 13. 2 Cor. xi. 2. ¶ *Which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.* The lamps used on such occasions were rather torches or flambeaux. They were made by winding rags around pieces of iron or earthen ware, sometimes hollowed so as to contain oil, and fastened to handles of wood. These torches were dipped in oil, and gave a large light. Marriage cere-

and went forth to meet the bridegroom.<sup>1</sup>

2 And <sup>a</sup> five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 29.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxii. 10.

monies in the east were conducted with great pomp and solemnity. The ceremony of marriage was performed commonly in the open air, on the banks of a stream. Both the bridegroom and bride were attended by friends; they were escorted in a palanquin, carried by four or more persons. After the ceremony of marriage, succeeded a feast of seven days if the bride was a virgin, or three days if she was a widow. This feast was celebrated in her father's house. At the end of that time the bridegroom conducted the bride, with great pomp and splendour, to his own home. This was done in the evening, or at night. Jer. vii. 34; xxv. 10; xxxiii. 11. Many friends and relations attended them; and besides those who went with them from the house of the bride, there was another company that came out from the house of the bridegroom to meet them, and welcome them. These were probably female friends and relatives of the bridegroom, who went out to welcome him and his new companion to their home. These are the virgins mentioned in this parable. Not knowing precisely the time when the procession would come, they probably went out early, and waited by the way till they should see indications of its approach. In the celebration of marriages in the east at the present day, many of the peculiar customs of ancient times are observed. At a Hindoo marriage, says a modern missionary, the procession of which I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived at Serampore, to which place the bridegroom was to come by water. After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced, in the very words of scripture, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." All the persons employed now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession; some of them had lost their lights, and were unprepared, but it was

then too late to seek them, and the caval-

their lamps, and took no <sup>a</sup> oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil <sup>a</sup> in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tar-

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xlviii. 1.

<sup>a</sup> 1 John ii. 28.

cade moved forward to the house of the bride; at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area, before the house, covered with an awning, where a great multitude of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed in a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time, and then went into the house, the door of which was immediately shut, and guarded by sergeants, and others expostulated with the doorkeepers, but in vain. Never was I struck with our Lord's beautiful parable as at this moment: "And the door was shut."

The journal of one of the American missionaries in Greece contains an account of an Armonian wedding which he attended; and, after describing the dress and previous ceremonies, she says, that, at twelve o'clock at night precisely, the cry was made by some of the attendants, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; and immediately five or six men set off to meet him. ¶ *Bridegroom.* A man newly married.

2—4. *And five of them were wise.* The words *wise* and *foolish*, here, refer only to their conduct in regard to the oil. The one part was wise in taking oil, the other foolish in neglecting it. The conduct of those who were wise refers to those who are prepared for the coming of Christ, prepared by possessing real piety, and not merely profession. The conduct of those without oil expresses the conduct of those who profess to love him, but are destitute of true grace, and are unprepared to meet him. Nothing can be argued from the number here, in regard to the proportion of sincere Christians among professors. Circumstances in parables are not to be pressed literally. They are necessary to keep up the story, and we must look chiefly or entirely to the scope or design of the parable to understand its meaning. In this parable the scope is to teach us to

ried, they all slumbered <sup>1</sup> and slept.

6 And at midnight <sup>2</sup> there was a <sup>3</sup> cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out <sup>4</sup> to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone <sup>5</sup> out. <sup>6</sup>

9 But the wise answered, say-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. v. 6. <sup>2</sup> Rev. xvi. 15. <sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 16. <sup>4</sup> Amos iv. 12. <sup>5</sup> Or, going out. <sup>6</sup> Luke xii. 35.

watch or be ready. Ver 13. It is not to teach us the number of those who shall be saved, and those who shall not. In teaching us to watch and be ready, our Lord gives great additional interest by the circumstances of this narrative; but there is no authority for saying that he meant to teach that just half of professing Christians would be deceived. The probability is that nothing like that number will be found to have been hypocrites. ¶ *Oil in their vessels.* The five foolish virgins probably expected that the bridegroom would come immediately. They therefore, provided for no delay, and no uncertainty. The wise virgins knew that the time of his coming was uncertain, and they, therefore, furnished themselves with oil. This was carried in vessels, so that it could be poured on the torch or flambeau when it was necessary. ¶ *Vessels.* Cups, cans, or any thing to hold oil.

5. *The bridegroom tarried.* That is, while they waited for him. It was uncertain at what time he would come. He delayed longer than they expected. ¶ *All slumbered and slept.* Waiting till near midnight, they fell into repose. This circumstance is not to be pressed to prove that all Christians will be asleep, or cold and careless, when the Lord Jesus will come. This would not be true. Many may be so; but many also will be looking for his coming. This circumstance is designed simply to show more clearly the duty of being ready. Ver. 13. It does not mean to affirm it as a fact that none will be ready.

6. *At midnight.* Later than was the usual custom, and hence they had fallen

ing. Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather <sup>7</sup> to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And <sup>8</sup> while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. <sup>9</sup>

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, <sup>10</sup> Lord, Lord, open to us.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lv. 1, 6. <sup>2</sup> Amos viii. 12, 13. <sup>3</sup> Heb. iii. 18, 19. <sup>4</sup> Rev. xxii. 11. <sup>5</sup> Ch. vii. 21—23. <sup>6</sup> Heb. xii. 17.

asleep. ¶ *A cry made.* Of those who were coming with the bridegroom.

7. *Trimmed their lamps.* Burning till midnight the oil was exhausted. They gave a dim and obscure light. They trimmed them by removing the burnt parts of the linen or the torch, so that they would burn clear. It was proper also to dip them again in oil, or to pour oil upon them. This strikingly represents the conduct of most men at the approach of death. They then begin to make ready. They are alarmed, anxious, trembling, and asking the aid of others; and often when it is far ever too late.

10. *Went in with him to the marriage.* The marriage-feast. The marriage ceremony took place before the bride left her father's house, but a feast was given at the house of her husband, and which was also called the marriage, or a part of the marriage solemnities. This part of the parable doubtless represents the entrance of those who are ready, or prepared, into the kingdom of God when the Son of man shall come. They will be ready who repent of their sins, who believe on the Lord Jesus, who live a holy life, and who wait for his coming. See Mark xvi. 16. John v. 24. Acts iii. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12. Rev. xxii. 11. ¶ *The door was shut.* No more could be admitted to the marriage-feast. So when the truly righteous shall all be received into heaven, it will be closed against all others. There will be no room for preparation afterwards. Eccl. ix. 10; xi. 3. Matt. xxv. 46. Rev. xxii. 11.

11. *Open unto us.* This is not to be

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I<sup>1</sup> know you not.

13 Watch<sup>2</sup> therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

<sup>1</sup> Hab. i. 13. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xxiv. 42, 44. Mark xiii. 33, 35. Luke xxi. 36.

understood as implying that any will come after the righteous shall be admitted into the kingdom, and claim admission then. It is a part of the parable to illustrate the general truth inculcated, or to prepare the way for what is afterwards said, and keep up the narrative and make it consistent.

12. *I know you not.* You were not in the company of those who attended me to the marriage feast, and are unknown to me. Applied to professing Christians, having only a profession of religion, but no real piety, it means, I know, or acknowledge you not as Christians. I do not approve of you, or delight in you, or admit you to be my friends. The word *know* is often used in the sense of approving, loving, acknowledging as real friends and followers. See Psa. i. 6. Matt. vii. 23. 1 Thess. v. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

13. *Watch, therefore, &c.* This is the scope or design of the whole parable. This is the great truth Jesus wished to inculcate, and all parts of the parable are to be interpreted in reference to this admonition. Like the virgins, many are professedly going to meet the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. Like the coming of the bridegroom, his advent will be sudden. It will be to many at an unexpected time. Many, even professing Christians, will be engaged in the business of the world; thoughtless about eternity; not expecting his approach, and not prepared. They will only profess to know him, but in works they will deny him. So death will come. All approaches of the Son of God to judge men are sudden, and to many unexpected. So many, when they shall see him coming, at death or the judgment, will begin, like the foolish virgins, to be active, and to prepare to die. But it will be too late. They that are ready will enter in, and heaven will be closed for ever against all others. That the Saviour will come is certain; the

14 ¶ For<sup>3</sup> the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Luke xix. 12—27. <sup>4</sup> A talent is £137 10s. ch. xviii. 24.

precise time when he will come is not certain. As the virgins should all have watched and been ready, so should we. They who are Christians should be ever watchful; and they who are not should lose no time to be ready; for in such an hour as they think not the Son of man shall come. ¶ *The Son of man cometh.* This refers, doubtless, to his coming in the day of judgment. The circumstances of the parable do not seem at all to apply to his coming to destroy Jerusalem, but are aptly expressive of his advent to judge the world.

14. *For the kingdom of heaven, &c.* This parable of the talents was spoken still further to illustrate the manner in which he would deal with men at his return to judgment. The words, *the kingdom of heaven*, are not in the original, but are very properly inserted by the translators. The design of the parable is to teach that those who improve their talents or faculties in the cause of religion—who improve them to their own salvation, and in doing good to others, shall be proportionally rewarded. But they who neglect their talents, and neither secure their own salvation nor do good to others, will be punished. The kingdom of heaven is like such a man; that is, God deals with men in his government as such a man did. ¶ *His own servants.* That is, such of them as he judged worthy such a trust. These represent the apostles, christian ministers, professing Christians, and perhaps all men. The going into a far country may represent the Lord Jesus going into heaven. He has given to all talents to improve. Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12. ¶ *His goods.* His property—representing the offices, abilities, and opportunities for doing good, which he has given to his professed followers.

15. *Five talents.* See Matt. xviii. 24. A talent of silver, Roman money, was £137 10s., Jewish money it was £342 3s. 9d. It here denotes the highest

talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability;<sup>1</sup> and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.<sup>2</sup>

19 After a long time<sup>3</sup> the lord

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xii. 6. 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5. Eph. iv. 11.  
<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxvi. 13—16. Luke xix. 20. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xxiv. 30.

abilities given to men; perhaps the highest offices in the church, and the greatest opportunity of doing good. ¶ *According to his several ability.* According to the ability of each one. According as he saw each one was adapted to improve it. So in the church and the world. God gives men stations which he judges them adapted to fill, and requires them to fill them. So he makes distinctions among men in regard to abilities, and in the powers and opportunities of usefulness; requiring them only to occupy those stations, and discharge their duties there. 1 Cor. iv. 7.

16, 17. The two who had received most employed their money in trade, and by honest industry doubled it before their master returned; representing the conduct of those who make a good improvement of their abilities, and employ them in doing good.

18. *Digged in the earth, &c.* This represents the conduct of those who neglect the abilities that God has given, and fail to do what he has required. This is done often: 1. On the plea that they do not occupy a high station. 2. That they have slender abilities, and can do little good. 3. As it was in this case, that God had not given them as much as he did others, and they will therefore do nothing. These pleas are without foundation: for, 1. God does not require us to do as much as those who have greater abilities; but this is not

of those servants cometh, and reckoneth<sup>4</sup> with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him,<sup>5</sup> Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler<sup>6</sup> over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xviii. 23, 24. <sup>5</sup> 2 Chron. xxxi. 20, 21.  
<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 5; x. 18. <sup>6</sup> Luke xii. 44; xxii. 29. Rev. iii. 21.

a reason why we should do nothing. 2 Cor. viii. 12. 2. That situation is honourable, and may be useful, where God has placed us; and though humble, yet in that we may do much good. 1 Cor. xii. 11—31. 3. Men of slender abilities may often do more good in the world than men of much greater talents. It is rather a warm heart than a strong head which is required to do good. An humble Christian, by his life, example, and conversation, may often do much more good than is done by those in more elevated stations, and with far greater gifts.

We are not to suppose by this, however, that our Saviour meant to teach that only those of feeble talents neglect their duty. The parable does not require us to do this; and the fact is, perhaps, that those most highly endowed are the farthest from properly improving their talents.

19. *After a long time, &c.* By the return of the lord of those servants to reckon with them, is denoted the return of Christ to call men to an account for the manner in which they have improved their talents. See Acts i. 11; xvii. 31. Rom. xiv. 12. 2 Cor. v. 10. 1 Thess. iv. 16. ¶ *Reckon with them.* To reckon is to settle accounts. Here it means to inquire into their faithfulness, and to reward or punish them accordingly.

20. *I have gained.* Gained by trading. Ver. 20. By honest industry.

21. *Ruler over many things.* I will

*Parable of the talents.*

MATTHEW.

A.D. 1

two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an

hard <sup>1</sup> man, reaping where thou hast not <sup>2</sup> sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25 And I was afraid, <sup>3</sup> and went and hid thy talent in the earth: *there* thou hast *that* is thine.

26 His lord answered and saith unto him, *Thou wicked* <sup>4</sup> and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

<sup>1</sup> Job xxi. 15. <sup>2</sup> Jer. ii. 31. <sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi. 4. Ch. xviii. 32. Job xv. 5, 6. Luke xix. Jude 15.

promote thee to greater honours and more important trusts. ¶ *Joy of thy Lord.* In the mean time share the pleasures and enjoyments of his palace, be his companion, and receive the rewards which he has promised thee. *The joy of thy lord* may mean either the festivals and rejoicing at his return, or the rewards which the lord had prepared for his faithful servants. Applied to Christians, it means, that they who rightly improve their talents shall at the return of Christ, be promoted to great honours in heaven, and be partakers of the joys of their Lord in the world of glory. See ch. v. 34; also 1 John ii. 28.

24. *The one talent.* The design of this part of the parable is to show that no one is excused in indolence because he has few talents. God will require of him only according to his ability. Luke xii. 48. 1 Cor. iv. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 12. ¶ *A hard man.* Of a sordid, griping disposition; taking advantage of the poor, and oppressing them. ¶ *Reaping, &c.* This is indicative of an avaricious and overbearing disposition. Compelling the poor to sow for him, and reaping all the benefit himself. ¶ *Hast not strawed.* The word *strew* means to scatter; as men scatter seed in sowing it. It may mean also to ventilate, or to fan by ventilating, or winnowing. As sowing the seed is mentioned just before, it may be that this refers to gathering grain fanned or winnowed by others, while he did nothing; indicating also a hard and sordid disposition.

25. *And I was afraid.* I feared lest by some accident thy talent would be lost if

I put it out to trade, and that I should severely punished by a hard master, therefore kept it laid up safely, and hid where it could not be lost. ¶ *That thine.* There is what properly belongs thee. There is the original talent thou gavest me, and that is all that can reasonably be required. Observe, here: That this expresses exactly the feelings of all sinners. God, in their view, is cruel, unjust. 2. All the excuses sinners are excuses for indolence and to cheat themselves out of heaven. The effect of this excuse was to lose reward; so of the excuses of sinners not doing their duty. 3. Sinners give everything to God. They are never willing to be liberal towards him, but stinted and close; and if they give, they do it with hard feelings, and say that it is all that he can claim.

26. *Slothful.* Indolent, lazy, who has done nothing. God will judge men, not merely for doing wrong, but for not doing right. See ver. 45. That servant was wicked, because he had such an opinion of his master; he had shown that he was slothful, by not making good use of his talent. Ver. 27. ¶ *Thou knewest, &c.* This should be understood, and may have been translated, as a question: you knew I was such a man, you ought to have acted accordingly, so as to have escaped punishment. *Didst thou know that I reap? &c.* Then thou shouldst have given my money to the exchange &c. This is not intended to add that he was such a man, but to condemn the slothful servant of guilt and folly in not having been prepared to meet his

## CHAPTER XXV.

## Mount of Olives.

oughtest therefore to  
my money to the ex-  
and then at my coming I  
received mine own with

therefore the talent from  
give it unto him which  
lents.

unto every one that hath  
iven, and he shall have  
: but from him that hath

. Mark iv. 23. Luke viii. 18 :

*exchangers.* The *exchangers*  
who were in the habit of  
oney, or receiving it on de-  
mote of interest, to be loaned  
higher interest. They com-  
tables in the temple, with  
to exchange or loan. See  
1. This money was left with  
not to exchange, nor to in-  
any such idle means, but by  
try and merchandise; but  
s too indolent for that, he  
st to have loaned it to the  
that his master might have  
to benefit from it. ¶ With  
h interest, increase, or gain.  
arry, in our language, has a  
tion, meaning unlawful or  
terest. This was contrary to  
cod. xxii. 25. Lev. xxv. 36.  
means gain, increase, or law-

*no every one that hath shall*  
see Note, ch. xiii. 12. This  
a proverbial expression. It  
oever rightly improves what  
to him shall receive more, or  
rarded; but he that misim-  
is committed to him shall not  
. In pecuniary matters, in  
ase of this parable, they who  
r money by industry or mer-  
crease it. They who do not,  
olent or vicious, lose what  
eems, and it goes into the  
faithful and industrious. In  
sense of the parable, it means  
ey who are faithful shall be  
ot, however that any thing,  
on from the unfaithful and  
m; and that the unfaithful

not shall be taken away even that  
which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable  
servant into outer darkness : \* there  
shall be weeping and gnashing of  
teeth.

31 ¶ When \* the Son of man  
shall come in his glory, and all  
the holy angels with him, then  
shall he sit upon the throne of his  
glory :

\* Ch. viii. 12. \* Ch. xvi. 27; xix. 28. Dan.  
vii. 13. Ezech. xiv. 5. Mark viii. 38. Acts i. 11.  
1 Thess. iv. 16. 2 Thess. i. 7. Jude 14. Rev. i. 7.

and indolent shall be taken away from  
their privileges and punished.

30. *And cast, &c.* See Note, ch. viii.  
12. The spiritual meaning of the parable  
may be thus summed up : 1. The servants  
of God are not all endowed with equal  
gifts and talents. 2. They are bound to  
employ their talents in promoting his  
honour, and in a proper improvement of  
them. 3. By employing their talents in  
a proper manner, they improve and  
strengthen them. 4. They will be judged  
according to the improvements they have  
made. 5. All sinners look on God as a  
hard master, and as unreasonable and  
tyrannical. 6. They will be judged, not  
merely for doing wrong, but for neglecting  
to do right. 7. If the servant who kept  
the talent entire without injuring it,  
and who returned it to his master as he re-  
ceived it, was nevertheless judged, con-  
demned, and cast away, what must they  
expect who abuse their talents, destroy by  
drunkenness and lust the noble faculties  
conferred on them, and squander the pro-  
perty that might be employed in advan-  
cing the interests of morals and religion !

31. *When the Son of man, &c.* This  
is in answer to the question which the  
disciples proposed to their Master respect-  
ing the end of the world. Ch. xxiv. 3. That  
this refers to the last judgment, and not,  
as some have supposed, to the destruction  
of Jerusalem, appears : 1. From the fact  
that it was in answer to an express inquiry  
respecting the end of the world. 2. *All*  
*nations* were to be assembled, which did  
not take place at Jerusalem. 3. A sepa-  
ration was to take place between the  
righteous and the wicked, which was not  
done at Jerusalem. 4. The rewards and



32 And <sup>1</sup> before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate <sup>2</sup> them one from another, as a shepherd <sup>3</sup> divideth his sheep from the goats:

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xiv. 10. <sup>2</sup> Cor. v. 10. Rev. xx. 12. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xiii. 49. Ezek. xx. 38. <sup>4</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 52. John x. 14, 27.

punishments are declared to be eternal. None of these things took place at the destruction of Jerusalem. ¶ *In his glory.* In his own proper honour. With his glorified body, and as the head and king of the universe. Acts i. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25. Eph. i. 20—22. 1 Thess. iv. 16. ¶ *The throne of his glory.* This means, in the language of the Hebrews, his glorious or splendid throne. It is not to be taken literally, as if there would be a material throne or seat of the King of Zion. It expresses the idea that he will come as a king and judge to assemble his subjects before him, and to appoint them their rewards.

32. *And before him, &c.* At his coming to judgment the world will be burned up and destroyed. 2 Peter iii. 10, 12. Rev. xx. 11. The dead in Christ—i. e., all true Christians—shall be first raised up from their graves. 1 Thess. iv. 16. The living shall be changed—i. e., shall be made like the glorified bodies of those that are raised from the dead. 1 Cor. xv. 52—54. 1 Thess. iv. 17. All the wicked shall rise and come forth to judgment. John v. 28, 29. Dan. xii. 2. Matt. xiii. 41, 42. Rev. xx. 13. Then shall the world be judged, the righteous saved, and the wicked punished. ¶ *And he shall separate, &c.* Shall determine respecting their character, and shall appoint them their doom accordingly.

33. *Shall set the sheep, &c.* By the sheep are denoted, here, the righteous. The name is given to them because the sheep is an emblem of innocence and harmlessness. See Psa. c. 3; lxxiv. 1; xxiii. John x. 7, 14—16, 27. ¶ *On the right hand.* The right hand is the place of honour, and denotes the situation of those who are honoured, or those who are virtuous. See Ecc. x. 2. Psa. cx. 1. Acts ii. 25, 33. Eph. i. 20. ¶ *The goats.* The wicked. See Ezek. xxxiv. 17. ¶ *The left.* That is, the left hand. This was

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right <sup>4</sup> hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed <sup>5</sup> of my Father, <sup>6</sup> inherit the

<sup>4</sup> Heb. i. 3. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxv. 15. <sup>6</sup> Rom. viii. 17. 1 Pet. i. 4.

the place of dishonour, denoting condemnation. See Ecc. x. 2.

34. *The king.* That is, the Lord Jesus, the King of Zion, and of the universe, now acting as Judge. Luke xix. 38. John xviii. 37. Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16. ¶ *Blessed of my Father.* Made happy, or raised to felicity by my Father. See Note, ch. v. 3. ¶ *Inherit the kingdom.* Receive as heirs the kingdom, or be received there as the sons of God. Christians are often called heirs of God. Rom. viii. 17. Gal. iv. 6, 7. Heb. i. 14. 1 John iii. 2. ¶ *Prepared for you, &c.* That is, designed for you, or appointed for you. The phrase, *from the foundation of the world*, is used to denote that this was appointed for them in the beginning; that God has no new plan; that the rewards which he will now confer on them he always intended to confer. Christ says to the righteous that the kingdom was prepared for them. Of course God meant to confer it on them. They were individuals; and it follows that he intended to bestow his salvation on them as individuals. Accordingly the salvation of his people is uniformly represented as the result of the free gift of God, according to his own pleasure, bestowed on individuals, and by a plan which is eternal. John vi. 37. Rom. viii. 29, 30. Eph. i. 4, 5, 11, 12. 2 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 2. This is right and consistent with justice; for, 1. All men are by nature equally undeserving. 2. Bestowing favours on one does not do injustice to another, where neither deserves favour. Pardoning one criminal is not injuring another. Bestowing great talents on Locke, Newton, or Paul, did not injure me. 3. If it is right for God to give eternal life to his people, or to admit them to heaven, it was right to determine to do it, which is but another way of saying that God resolved from all eternity to do right. Those who perish choose the paths which

<sup>1</sup> kingdom <sup>2</sup> prepared for you from the foundation of the world :

35 For <sup>3</sup> I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, <sup>4</sup> and ye took me in :

36 Naked, <sup>5</sup> and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited <sup>6</sup> me : I was in prison, <sup>7</sup> and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. ii. 12. Rev. v. 10. <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 8. Heb. xi. 16. <sup>3</sup> Isa. lviii. 7. Ezek. xviii. 7. <sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. iv. 9. <sup>5</sup> 3 John 5. <sup>6</sup> Jas. ii. 15, 16. <sup>7</sup> Jas. i. 27. <sup>8</sup> 2 Tim. i. 16. Heb. xiii. 2.

lead to death, and will not be saved by the merits of Jesus. No blame can be charged on God if he does not save them against their will. John v. 40. Mark xvi. 15, 16.

35, 36. *I was an hungred.* The union between Christ and his people is the most tender and endearing of all connexions. It is represented by the closest unions of which we have knowledge. John xv. 4—6. Eph. iv. 23—32. 1 Cor. vi. 15. This is a union, not physical, but moral ; a union of feelings, interests, plans, destiny ; or, in other words, he and his people have similar feelings, love the same objects, share the same trials, and inherit the same blessedness. John xiv. 19. Rom. viii. 17. Rev. iii. 5, 21. Hence he considers favours shown to his people as shown to himself, and will reward them accordingly. Matt. x. 40, 42. They show attachment to him, and love to his cause. By showing kindness to the poor, and needy, and sick, they show that they possess his spirit, for he did it when on earth ; they evince attachment to him, for he was poor and needy ; and they show that they have the proper spirit to fit them for heaven. Mark ix. 41. Jas. ii. 1—5. 1 John iii. 14, 17. ¶ *Was a stranger.* The word *stranger* means a foreigner, or traveller ; in our language, one unknown to us. To receive such to the rites of hospitality was, in eastern countries, where there were few or no public houses, a great virtue. See Gen. xviii. 1—8. Heb. xiii. 2. ¶ *Took me in.*

*thee ?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink ?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in ? or naked, and clothed *thee* ?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch <sup>8</sup> as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart <sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Prov. xix. 17. Mark ix. 41. Heb. vi. 10. <sup>9</sup> Ch. vii. 23. Luke xiii. 27.

Into your house. Received me kindly. ¶ *Naked.* Poorly clothed. Among the Jews they were called naked who were clad in poor raiment, or they who had on only the tunic or inner garment, without any outer garment. See Note, ch. v. 40 ; also Job xxii. 6. Isa. lviii. 7. Mark xiv. 51, 52. Acts xix. 16.

37—39. *Then shall the righteous, &c.* This answer is indicative of humility—a deep sense of their being unworthy such commendation. They will feel that their poor acts of kindness have come so far short of what they should have been, that they have no claim to praise or reward. It is not, however, to be supposed that in the day of judgment this will be actually said by the righteous, but that this would be a proper expression of their feelings.

40. *One of the least of these.* One of the obscurest, least known, poorest, and most despised and afflicted. ¶ *My brethren.* Either those who are Christians, whom he condescends to call brethren ; or those who are afflicted, poor, and persecuted, who are his brethren and companions in suffering ; and who suffer as he did on earth. See ch. xii. 50. Heb. ii. 11. How great is the condescension and kindness of the Judge of the world, thus to reward our actions, and to consider what we have done to the poor as done to him !

41. *On the left hand.* The wicked. ¶ *Ye cursed.* That is, ye who are devoted to destruction, whose characters deserve everlasting punishment, and who

from me, ye cursed, into <sup>1</sup> everlasting fire, <sup>2</sup> prepared for the devil and his angels :

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink :

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in : naked, and ye clothed me not : sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xlii. 40, 42. Rev. xiv. 11. <sup>2</sup> Jude 6. Rev. xx. 10.

are about to enter into it. To curse is the opposite of to bless. It implies a negation of all the blessings of heaven, and a positive infliction of eternal sufferings. ¶ *Everlasting fire.* Fire, here, is used to denote punishment. The image is employed to express extreme suffering, as a death by burning is one of the most horrible that can be conceived. The image was taken probably, from the fires burning in the valley of Hinnom. See Note, ch. v. 22. It has been asked whether the wicked will be burned in literal fire, and the common impression has been that they will be. Respecting that, however, it is to be observed : 1. That the main truth intended to be taught refers not to the manner of suffering, but to the certainty and intensity of it. 2. That the design, therefore, was to present an image of terrific and appalling suffering, an image well represented by fire. 3. That this image was well known to the Jews, Isa. lxvi. 24, and therefore expressed the idea in a very strong manner. 4. That all the truth that Christ intended to convey appears to be expressed in the certainty, intensity, and eternity, of future torment. 5. That there is no distinct affirmation respecting the mode of that punishment, where the mode was the subject of discourse. 6. That to us it is a subject of comparatively little consequence what will be the mode of punishment. The fact that the wicked will be eternally punished, cursed of God, should awe every spirit, and lead every man to secure his salvation. As, however, the body will be raised, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a mode of punishment will be adopted suited to the body, perhaps bearing some analogy to suffering

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst. or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee ? <sup>3</sup>

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch<sup>4</sup> as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 13. 20. Jer. ii. 23, 35. Luke x. 29. <sup>4</sup> Prov. xiv. 31 ; xvii. 5. Zech. ii. 8. Acts ix. 5.

here, in its various forms of flames, and racks, and cold, and heat, and war, and disease, and ungratified desire, and remorse—perhaps the concentration of all earthly woes, all that makes man miserable here, poured upon the naked body and spirit of the wicked in hell, for ever and ever. ¶ *Prepared for the devil.* The devil is the prince of evil spirits. This place of punishment was fitted for him when he rebelled against God. Jude 6. Rev. xii. 8, 9. ¶ *His angels.* His messengers, his servants, or those angels that he drew off from heaven by his rebellion, and whom he has employed as his messengers to do evil. The word may extend also to all his followers, fallen angels or men. There is a remarkable difference between the manner in which the righteous shall be addressed, and the wicked. Christ will say to the one that the kingdom was prepared for them ; to the other, that the fire was not prepared for them, but for another race of beings. They will inherit it because they have the same character as the devil, and therefore are fitted to the same place, not because it was originally fitted for them.

45. *Inasmuch as ye did it not, &c.* By not doing good to the followers of Christ, they showed that they had no real love to him. By not doing good to the poor and needy, to the stranger and the prisoner, they show that they have not his spirit, and are not like him, and are unfit for his kingdom. Let it be observed here, that the public ground of their condemnation is the neglect of duty, or because they did it not. We are not to suppose that they will not also be condemned for their open and positive sins

46 And <sup>1</sup> these shall go away in-<sup>1</sup> Dan. xii. 2. John v. 29.

See *Psa.* ix. 17. *Rom.* ii. 9. *1 Cor.* vi. 9, 10. *Eph.* v. 5. *Col.* iii. 5, 6. *Rev.* xxi. 8. But their neglect of charity, or of doing good to him and his people, may be the public reason of condemning them: 1. Because he wished to give pre-eminence to those virtues, to excite his followers to do them. 2. Men should be punished for neglect as well as positive sin. Sin is a violation of the law, or refusing to do what God commands. 3. Nothing better shows the true state of the heart than those duties, and the true character can be as well tested by them as by open crimes.

If it be asked how the heathen who never heard of the name of Christ can be justly condemned in this manner, it may be answered: 1. That Christ acknowledges all the poor, and needy, and strangers of every land, as his brethren. See *ver.* 40. 2. That by neglecting the duties of charity they show that they have not his spirit, are not like him. 3. That these duties are clearly made known by conscience and the light of nature, as well as by revelation; and men may therefore be condemned for the neglect of them. 4. That they are not condemned for not believing in Christ, of whom they have not heard, but for a wrong spirit, neglect of duty, open crime; for being unlike Christ, and therefore unfit for heaven. ¶ *One of the least of these.* These on my right hand. My brethren. Those who are saved.

46. *And these, &c.* These persons. Many, holding the doctrine of universal salvation, have contended that God would punish sin only. Christ says that those on his left hand shall go away; not sins, but sinners. Besides, sin, as an abstract thing, cannot be punished. It is nothing but the acts of transgressors; and to be reached at all, must be reached by punishing the offenders. ¶ *Into everlasting punishment.* The original word, here translated *punishment*, means torment, or suffering inflicted for crime. The noun is used but in one other place in the New Testament. *1 John* iv. 13: Fear hath torment. The verb from which the noun is derived is twice used. *Acts* iv. 21. *2 Pet.* ii. 9. *In all these places anguish,*

to everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

suffering, punishment is denoted. The word does not mean simply a state or condition, but absolute, positive suffering; and if this word does not teach it, no word could express the idea that the wicked would suffer. It has been contended that the sufferings of the wicked would not be eternal, or without end. It is not the purpose of these Notes to enter into debates of that kind further than to fix the meaning of words. In regard to the meaning of the word *everlasting* in this place, it is to be observed: 1. That the literal meaning of the word expresses absolute eternity, always being, *Matt.* xviii. 8; *xix.* 16. *Mark* iii. 29. *Rom.* ii. 7. *Heb.* v. 9. 2. That the obvious, plain interpretation of the word demands this signification. 3. That admitting that it was the Saviour's design ever to teach this doctrine, this would be the very word to express it; and if this does not teach it, it could not be taught. 4. That it is not taught in any plainer manner in any confession of faith on the globe; and if this may be explained away, all those may be. 5. That our Saviour knew that this would be so understood by nine-tenths of the world; and if he did not mean to teach it, he has knowingly led them into error, and his honesty cannot be vindicated. 6. That he knew that the doctrine was calculated to produce fear and terror; and if he was benevolent, his conduct cannot be vindicated in exciting unnecessary fears. 7. That the word used here is the same in the original as that used to express the eternal life of the righteous; if one can be proved to be limited in duration, the other can by the same arguments. The proof that the righteous will be happy for ever, is precisely the same, and no other than that the wicked will be miserable for ever. 8. That it is confirmed by many other passages of scripture. *Psa.* ix. 17. *Isa.* xxxiii. 14. *Mark* xvi. 16. *Luke* xvi. 26. *John* iii. 36. *2 Thess.* i. 7—9. *Rev.* xiv. 11. ¶ *Life eternal.* Man by sin has plunged himself into death, temporal, spiritual, eternal. Christ, by coming and dying, has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light. *2 Tim.* i. 10. *Life* is the opposite of

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*The last passover approaching, 1, 2. Consultation to take Jesus, 3—5. Christ anointed at Bethany, 6—13. Judas agreeing to betray Jesus, 14—16. Preparation for the passover, 17—19. Jesus intimates the treason of Judas, 20—25. The Lord's supper instituted, 26—30. Peter's denial of Christ foretold, 31—35. Agony in Gethsemane, 36—46. Jesus betrayed and seized, 47—56. Jesus*

*tried and condemned by the Jews, 57, 58. Peter's denial of Christ, 69—75.*

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 Ye<sup>1</sup> know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiv. 1-11. Luke xxii. 1-8. John xiii. 1.

death. It denotes here, freedom from death, and positive holiness and happiness for ever.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1-16. See also Mark xiv. 1-11. Luke xxii. 1-6. John xiii. 1, 2.

2. *After two days is the feast of the passover.* See Note, ch. xii. 1-8. The festival of the passover was celebrated to preserve among the Jews the memory of their liberation from Egyptian servitude, and of the safety of their first-born in that night when the first-born of the Egyptians perished. Exod. xii. The name *passover* was given to the feast because the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites without slaying their first-born, while the Egyptians were cut off. Exod. xii. 13. It was celebrated seven days, viz. from the 15th to the 21st of the month Abib, or Nisan, (April). Exod. xii. 15-20; xxiii. 15. During all this period the people ate unleavened bread, and hence the festival was sometimes called the feast of unleavened bread. Exod. xii. 18. Lev. xxiii. 6. On the evening of the fourteenth day, all the leaven or yeast in the family was removed with great care, as it is to the present time, a circumstance to which the apostle alludes in 1 Cor. v. 7. On the tenth day of the month the master of a family separated a lamb or a goat of a year old from the flock, Exod. xii. 1-6, which he slew on the fourteenth day before the altar. Deut. xvi. 2, 5, 6. The lamb was commonly slain at about three o'clock, P.M. The blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled on the door-posts of the houses in Egypt; afterwards it was poured by the priests at the foot of the altar. Exod. xii. 7. The lamb thus slain was roasted whole, with two spits thrust through it—one length-

wise, and one transversely—crossing each other near the fore legs; so that the animal was, in a manner, crucified. Not a bone of it might be broken—a circumstance strongly representing the sufferings of our Lord Jesus, the passover slain for us. John xix. 36. 1 Cor. v. 7. This roasted, the lamb was served up with wild and bitter herbs. Not fewer than ten, nor more than twenty persons, were admitted to this sacred feast. At first it was observed with the loins girt about, with sandals on their feet, and with all the preparations for an immediate journey. This in Egypt was significant of the haste with which they were about to depart from the land of bondage. The custom was afterwards retained.

The order of the celebration of this feast was as follows: The ceremony commenced with drinking a cup of wine mingled with water, after having given thanks to God for it. This was the first cup. Then followed the washing of hands, with another short form of thanksgiving to God. The table was then supplied with the provisions, viz. the bitter salad, the unleavened bread, the lamb, and a thick sauce composed of dates, figs, raisins, vinegar, &c. They then took a small quantity of salad, with another thanksgiving, and ate it. After which, all the dishes were removed from the table, and a second cup of wine set before each guest as at first. The dishes were removed, it is said, to excite the curiosity of children, and to lead them to make inquiry into the cause of this observance. See Exod. xii. 26, 27. The leading person at the feast then began and rehearsed the history of the servitude of the Jews in Egypt, the manner of their deliverance, and the reason of instituting the passover. The dishes were then returned to the table,

3 Then <sup>1</sup> assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. ii. 1, 2; lvi. 6; lxiv. 4—6. Jer. xi. 19; xvi. 18—20.

and he said, "This is the passover which we eat, because that the Lord passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt;" and then holding up the salad and the unleavened bread, he stated the design, viz. that the one represented the bitterness of the Egyptian bondage, and the other the suddenness of their deliverance. This done, he repeated Psa. cxiii. cxiv., and offered a short prayer, when all the company drank the wine that had been standing some time before them. This was the second cup. The hands were then again washed, and the meal then eaten, with the usual forms and solemnities. After which they washed the hands again, and then drank another cup of wine, called the cup of blessing, because the leader was accustomed in a particular manner, over that cup, to offer thanks to God for his goodness. This is the cup which our Saviour is supposed to have taken when he instituted the Lord's supper, called by Paul the cup of blessing. 1 Cor. x. 16. There was still another cup, which was drunk when they were about to separate, called the Hallel, because in connexion with it they were accustomed to repeat the lesser Hallel, or Psa. cxv. cxvi. cxvii. cxviii. In accordance with this, our Saviour and his disciples sang a hymn, as they were about to go to the mount of Olives. Ver. 30. It is probable that our Saviour complied with these rites according to the custom of the Jews. While doing so he signified that the typical reference of the passover was about to be accomplished, and he instituted in the place of it the supper—the communion—and of course the obligation to keep the passover then ceased. ¶ *The Son of man is betrayed.* Will be betrayed. He did not mean to say that they then knew that he would be betrayed, for it does not appear that they had been informed of the precise time. But they knew that the passover was at hand, and he then informed them that he would be betrayed. ¶ *To be crucified.* To be put to death on the cross. See Note on ch. xxvii. 35.

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.

5 But they said, <sup>2</sup> not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. i. 10—15; lviii. 3—7.

3. *Then assembled, &c.* This was a meeting of the great council or sanhedrim. Note, ch. v. 22. ¶ *The palace.* The original word properly denotes the hall or large area in the centre of the dwelling, called the court. See Note, ch. ix. 2. It may be understood, however, as referring to the palace itself. ¶ *The high priest.* Holding the office that was first conferred on Aaron. Exod. xxviii. The office was at first hereditary, descending on the eldest son. Num. iii. 10. Antiochus Epiphanes a.c. 160, when he had possession of Juden, sold the office to the highest bidder. In the year 152 B.C. Alexander king of Syria, conferred the office on Jonathan, whose brother Simon was afterwards created by the Jews both prince and high priest. His posterity, who at the same time sustained the office of kings, occupied the station of high priest till the time of Herod, who changed the incumbents of the office at pleasure; a liberty which the Romans ever afterwards exercised without any restraint. The office was never more fluctuating than in the time of our Saviour. Hence it is said that Caiaphas was high priest for that year. John xi. 51. Persons who had been high priests, and had been removed from office, still retained the name. Hence more than one high priest is sometimes mentioned, though strictly there was but one who held the office.

4. *By subtilty.* By guile, deceit, or in some secret manner, so that the people would not know it. Jesus was regarded by the people as a distinguished prophet, and by most of them probably as the Messiah; and the sanhedrim did not dare to take him away openly, lest the people should rise and rescue him. They were probably aware that he had gone out to Bethany, or to some of the places adjacent to the city; and as he passed his nights there, and not in the city, there was need of guile to ascertain the place where he remained, and to take him.

5. *Not on the feast day.* Not during

6 ¶ Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

7 There <sup>1</sup> came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of

<sup>1</sup> John xi. 1, 2, xii. 3.

the feast. The feast lasted seven days. A vast multitude attended from all parts of Judea. Jerusalem is said to have contained at such times three millions of people. Amidst such a multitude there were frequent tumults and seditions : and the sanhedrim was justly apprehensive there would be now, if in open day, and in the temple, they took away a teacher so popular as Jesus was, and put him to death. They therefore sought how they might do it secretly, and by guile.

6. *In Bethany.* See Note, ch. xxi. 1. ¶ *Simon the leper.* Simon who had been a leper. ¶ *Leper.* See Note, ch. viii. 2. It was unlawful to eat with persons that had the leprosy : and it is more than probable, therefore, that this Simon had been healed, perhaps by our Lord himself. John, ch. xii. 1, says that this was the house where Lazarus was, who had been raised from the dead. Probably Lazarus was a relative of Simon's, and was living with him. He further says that they made Jesus a supper, and that Martha served. John says that this was six days before the passover. From the order in which Matthew and Mark mention it, it would have been supposed that it was but two days before the passover, and after the cleansing of the temple. But it is to be observed, 1. That Matthew and Mark often neglect the exact order of the events that they record. 2. That they do not affirm at what time this was. They leave it indefinite, saying that while Jesus was in Bethany he was anointed by Mary. 3. That Matthew introduced it here for the purpose of giving a connected account of the conduct of Judas. Judas murmured at the waste of the ointment, John xii. 5 ; and one of the effects of his indignation, it seems, was to betray his Lord.

7. *There came to him a woman.* This woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha. John xii. 3. ¶ *Having an alabaster box.* The alabaster is a species of marble, distinguished for being light, and of a beautiful white colour,

very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*.

8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, <sup>2</sup> To what purpose is this waste ?

<sup>2</sup> Hag. i. 2—4. Mal. i. 7—10, 13.

almost transparent. It was much used by the ancients for the purpose of preserving various kinds of ointment in.

¶ *Of very precious ointment.* That is, of ointment of much value ; that was rare, and difficult to be obtained. Mark, ch. xiv. 3, and John, ch. xii. 3, say that it was ointment of spikenard. In the original it is *nard*. It was procured from an herb growing in the Indies, chiefly obtained from the root—though sometimes also from the bark. It was liquid, so as easily to flow when the box or phial was open, and was distinguished particularly for an agreeable smell. See Cant. i. 12. The ancients were much in the habit of anointing or perfuming their bodies, and the *nard* was esteemed one of the most precious perfumes. John says there was a pound of this, ch. xii. 3. The pound in use among them was the Roman pound, of twelve ounces, answering to our troy weight. That there was a large quantity is farther evident from the fact that Judas says it might have been sold for three hundred pence, £9, and that the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. (John.) *And poured it on his head.* They were accustomed chiefly to anoint the head, or hair. John says, ch. xii. 3, that she poured it on the feet of Jesus, and wiped them with her hair. There is, however, no contradiction. She probably poured it both on his head and his feet. Matthew and Mark having recorded the former, John, who wrote his gospel in part to record events omitted by them, relates that the ointment was also poured on the feet of the Saviour. To pour ointment on the head was common. To pour it on the feet was an action of distinguished humility and attachment to the Saviour, and therefore deserved to be particularly recorded. ¶ *As he sat at meat.* That is, at supper. In the original, as he reclined at supper. The ancients did not sit at their meals, but reclined at length on couches. See Note, ch. xxiii. 6. She came up, therefore, behind him, as he lay reclined at the table ; and bending

9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them,<sup>1</sup> Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

<sup>1</sup> Job xlii. 7. Mark xiv. 6. Gal. vi. 17.

down over the couch, she poured the ointment on his head and feet; and probably kneeling at his feet, wiped them with her hair.

8. *They had indignation.* John says that Judas expressed indignation. Probably some of the others felt indignation, but Judas only gave vent to his feelings. The reason why Judas was indignant was that he had the bag, John xii. 6, i. e. the purse, or repository of articles given to the disciples and to the Saviour. He was a thief; and was in the habit, it seems, of taking out and putting to his own use what was put in for them in common. The leading trait of Judas's character was avarice; and no opportunity was suffered to pass without attempting, by base and wicked means, to make money. In his example, an avaricious man may learn the true nature and the effect of that grovelling and wicked passion. It led him to commit the enormous crime of betraying his Lord to death; and it will always lead its possessor to guilt. No small part of the sins of the men of the world can be traced to avarice; and many and many a time since the days of Judas has the Lord Jesus been betrayed among his professed friends by the same base propensity. ¶ *In this waste.* This loss or destruction of property. They could see no use in it, and they therefore supposed it was lost.

9. *Sold for much.* Mark and John say, for three hundred pence; that is, for about £9. This, to them, was a large sum. Mark says, they murmured against her. There was also an implied murmuring against the Saviour for suffering it to be done. The murmuring was, however, without cause. It was the property of Mary. She had a right to dispose of it as she pleased, answering not to them, but to God. They had no right over it, and no cause of complaint if it had been wasted. So Christians now are at liberty to dispose of their property as they please, either in

11 For<sup>2</sup> ye have the poor always with you; but<sup>3</sup> me ye have not always.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xv. 11. <sup>3</sup> John xiv. 19; xvii. 11.

distributing the bible, in supporting the gospel, in sending it to heathen nations, or in aiding the poor. The world, like Judas, esteems it to be wasted. Like Judas, they are indignant. They say it might be disposed of in a better way. Yet, like Judas, they are interfering in that which concerns them not. Like other men, Christians have a right to dispose of their property as they please, answerable only to God. And though an avaricious world esteems it to be waste, yet if their Lord commands it, it will be found to be the only way in which it was right for them to dispose of that property, and will be found not to have been in vain.

10. *Trouble ye the woman.* That is, disturb her mind by insinuations, as if she had done wrong. ¶ *A good work on me.* She has done it with a mind grateful, and full of love to me. The work was good, also, as it was preparative to his death. Ver. 12.

11. *For ye have the poor, &c.* Mark adds, "Whosoever ye will, ye may do them good." It was right that they should regard the poor. It was a plain precept of religion, see Psa. xli. 1; Prov. xiv. 21, xxix. 7; Gal. ii. 10, and our Saviour would not prohibit it, but do all that was possible to excite his followers to the duty. But every duty should be done in its place, and the duty then incumbent was that which Mary had performed. They would afterwards have abundant occasion of showing their regard for the poor. ¶ *Me ye have not always.* He alludes here to his dying, and his going away to heaven. He would be their friend and their Saviour, but he would not be bodily present with them always, so that they could show kindness in this way to him.

12. *She did it for my burial.* It is not to be supposed that Mary understood clearly that he was then about to die, for the apostles, it seems, did not fully com-



13 Verily I say unto you, Where-soever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

14 ¶ Then one <sup>1</sup> of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 4. Psa. xli. 9; lv. 12—14.

prehend it, or that she intended the anointing for his burial; but she had done it as an act of kindness and love, to show her regard for her Lord. He said that it was a proper preparation for his burial. Anciently, bodies were anointed and embalmed for the purpose of the sepulchre. Jesus said that this was really a preparation for that burial, a fitting him in a proper manner for the tomb.

13. *A memorial.* Any thing to produce remembrance. This should be told to her honour and credit, as a memorial of her piety and self-denial; and it is right that the good deeds of the pious should be recorded and had in recollection.

14. *Then one of the twelve, &c.* Luke says that Satan entered into Judas. That is, Satan tempted or instigated him to do it. Probably he tempted Judas by appealing to his avarice, his ruling passion, and by suggesting that now was a favourable opportunity to make money rapidly, by selling his Lord. ¶ *Judas Iscariot.* See Note, ch. x. 4. ¶ *Unto the chief priests.* The high priest, and those who had been high priests. The ruling men of the sanhedrim. Luke adds, ch. xxiii. 4, that he went also to the captains. It was necessary on account of the great wealth deposited in the temple and its great sacredness, to guard it by night. Accordingly men were stationed around it, whose leaders or commanders were called captains. Acts iv. 1. These men were commonly of the tribe of the Levites, were closely connected with the priests, were men of influence, and Judas went to them, therefore, as well as to the priests to offer himself as a traitor. Probably his object was to get as much money as possible, and he might, therefore, have attempted to make a bargain with several of them apart from each other.

15. *And they covenanted with him.*

15 And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they <sup>\*</sup> covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

<sup>\*</sup> Ch. xxvii. 3. Zech. xi. 12, 13.

Made a bargain with him. Agreed to give him. Mark says they promised to give him money. They did not pay it to him then, lest he should deceive them. When the deed was done, and before he was made sensible of its guilt, they paid him. See ch. xxvii. 3. Acts i. 18. ¶ *Thirty pieces of silver.* Mark and Luke do not mention the sum. They say that they promised him money; in the original, silver. In Matthew, in the original, it is thirty silvers, or silverlings. This was the price of a slave. See Exod. xxi. 32. And it is not unlikely that this sum was fixed on by them to show their contempt of Jesus, and that they regarded him as of little value. There is no doubt also, that they understood that such was the anxiety of Judas to obtain money, that he would betray his Lord for any sum. The money usually denoted by *pieces of silver*, when the precise sum is not mentioned, is a shekel, a silver Jewish coin, amounting to about 2s. 3d. The whole sum, therefore, for which Judas committed this crime was £3 7s. 6d.

16. *Sought opportunity to betray him.* Luke adds, "in the absence of the multitude." This was the chief difficulty, to deliver him into the hands of the priests so as not to have it known by the people, or so as not to excite tumult. The *opportunity* which he sought, therefore, was one in which the multitude would not see him, or could not rescue the Saviour. ¶ *To betray him.* The word means to deliver into the hands of an enemy by treachery or breach of trust; to do it while friendship or faithfulness is professed. All this took place in the case of Judas. But the word in the original does not necessarily imply this. It means simply to deliver up, or to give into their hands. He sought opportunity how he might deliver him up to them, agreeably to the contract.

17 ¶ Now <sup>1</sup> the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, <sup>2</sup> Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 6, 18. <sup>2</sup> Luke xxii. 8, 9.

17—19. See also Mark xiv. 12—16. Luke xxii. 7—13.

17. *The first day, &c.* The feast continued eight days, including the day on which the paschal lamb was killed and eaten. Exod. xii. 15. That was the fourteenth day of the month Abib, answering to parts of our March and April. ¶ *Of unleavened bread.* Called so because, during those eight days, no bread made with yeast or leaven was allowed to be eaten. Luke says, "in which the passover must be killed." That is, in which the paschal lamb, or the lamb eaten on the occasion, must be killed. The word in the original translated *passover*, commonly means, not the feast itself, but the lamb that was killed on the occasion. See Exod. xii. 43. Num. ix. 11. John xviii. 28. 1 Cor. v. 7; where Christ our passover, is said to be slain for us; i. e. our paschal lamb, so called on account of his innocence, and his being offered as a victim, or sacrifice, for our sins.

18. *Go into the city to such a man.* That is, Jerusalem, called the city by way of eminence. Luke says that the disciples whom he sent were Peter and John. The man to whom they were to go it seems he did not mention by name, but he told them that when they came into the city, a man would meet them bearing a pitcher of water. (See Mark and Luke). Him they were to follow, and in the house which he entered they would find a room prepared. The name of the man was not mentioned. The house in which they were to keep the passover was not mentioned. The reason of this probably was, that Christ was desirous of concealing from Judas the place where they would keep the passover. He was acquainted with the design of Judas to betray him. He knew that if Judas was acquainted with the place beforehand, he could easily give information to the chief priests, and it would give them a favourable oppor-

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, <sup>3</sup> My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxii. 53. John vii. 6, 30; xii. 23.

tunity to surprise them, and apprehend him without making a tumult. Though it was certain that he would not be delivered up before the time appointed by the Father, yet it was proper to use the means to prevent it. There can be but little doubt that Jesus was acquainted with this man, and that he was a disciple. The direction which he gave his disciples most clearly proves that he was omniscient. Amidst so great a multitude going at that time into the city, it was impossible to know that a particular man would be met, a man bearing a pitcher of water, unless Jesus had all knowledge, and was therefore divine. ¶ *The Master saith.* This was the name by which Jesus was probably known among the disciples, and one which he directed them to give to him. See ch. xxiii. 8, 10. It means literally the teacher, as opposed to the disciple, or learner; not the master, as opposed to the servant or slave. The fact that they used this name as if the man would know whom they meant, and the fact that he understood them and made no inquiries about him, shows that he was acquainted with Jesus, and was probably himself a disciple. ¶ *My time is at hand.* That is, is near. By his time here may be meant, either his time to eat the passover, or the time of his death. It has been supposed by many that Jesus, in accordance with a part of the Jews who rejected traditions, anticipated the usual observance of the passover, or kept it one day sooner. The Pharisees had devised many forms of ascertaining when the month commenced. They placed witnesses around the heights of the temple to observe the first appearance of the new moon; they examined the witnesses with much formality, and endeavoured also to obtain the exact time by astronomical calculations. Others held that the month properly commenced when the moon was visible. Thus it is said a difference arose between them about

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 4-8. 2 Chron. xxxv. 10, 11.

the time of the passover, and that Jesus kept it one day sooner than most of the people. The foundation of the opinion that Jesus anticipated the usual time of keeping the passover, is the following: 1. In John xviii. 28, it is said that on the day on which our Lord was crucified, and of course the day after he had eaten the passover, the chief priests would not go into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover, evidently meaning that it was to be eaten that day. 2. In John xix. 14, the day on which he was crucified is called the preparation of the passover, that is, the day on which it was prepared to be eaten in the evening. 3. In John xix. 31, the day in which our Lord lay in the grave was called the great day of the sabbath, "a high day." That is, the day after the passover was killed, the sabbath occurring on the first day of the feast properly, and therefore a day of peculiar solemnity. Yet our Saviour had partaken of it two days before, and therefore the day before the body of the people. If this opinion be true, then the phrase, "my time is at hand," means my time for keeping the passover is near. Whether the opinion be true or not, there may be a reference also to his death. This was probably a disciple of his, though perhaps a secret one. Jesus might purpose to keep the passover at his house, that he might inform him more particularly respecting his death, and prepare him for it. He sent therefore to him, and said, *I will keep the passover at thy house.*

Mark and Luke add, that he would show them "a large upper room, furnished and prepared." Ancient writers remark that at the time of the great feasts, the houses in Jerusalem were all open to receive guests; that the houses were in a manner common to the people of Judea; and there is no doubt, therefore, that the master of a house would have it ready on such occasions for company. It is possible also that there might have been an agreement between this man and our Lord, that he would prepare

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he said,

his house for him, though this was unknown to the disciples. The word rendered *furnished* means literally spread; that is, spread with carpets, and with couches, on which to recline at the table, after the manner of the east. See Note, ch. xxiii. 6.

19. *They made ready the passover.* That is, they procured a paschal lamb, multitudes of which were kept for sale in the temple; they procured it to be killed and flayed by the priests, and the blood to be poured at the altar; they roasted the lamb, and prepared the bitter herbs, the sauce, and the unleavened bread. This was done, it seems, while our Lord was absent, by the two disciples.

20. *When the even was come.* The lamb was killed between the evenings, Exod. xii. 6, (Hebrew); that is, between three o'clock, P. M., and nine in the evening. The Jews reckoned two evenings, one from three o'clock, P. M., to sunset, the other from sunset to the close of the first watch in the night, or nine o'clock. The paschal supper was commonly eaten after the setting of the sun, and often in the night. Exod. xii. 8.

¶ *He sat down.* At first the supper was eaten standing, with their loins girded and their staff in their hand, denoting the haste with which they were about to flee from Egypt. Afterwards, however, they introduced the practice, it seems, of partaking of this as they did of their ordinary meals. The original word is, he reclined; i. e., he placed himself on the couch in a reclining posture, in the usual manner in which they partook of their meals. Note, ch. xxiii. 6. While sitting there at the supper, the disciples had a dispute which should be the greatest. See Notes on Luke xxii. 24-30. At this time also, before the institution of the Lord's supper, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, to teach them humility. See Notes on John xiii. 1-20.

21-24. *As they did eat, &c.* The account contained in these verses is also recorded in Mark xiv. 18-21, Luke xxii. 21-23, John xiii. 21, 22. John

Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, <sup>1</sup> and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 38. Mark xiv. 19.

says, that before Jesus declared that one of them should betray him, "he was troubled in spirit, and testified." That is, he felt deeply the greatness of the crime that Judas was about to commit, and anticipated with much feeling the sufferings that he was to endure. ¶ *He testified.* He bore witness, or he declared.

22. *They were exceeding sorrowful.* John says, they looked on one another, like men in anxiety, conscious each one, except Judas, of no such intention, and each one beginning to examine himself, to find whether he was the person intended. This showed their innocence, and their attachment to Jesus. It showed how sensitive they were to the least suspicion of the kind. It showed that they were willing to know themselves; thus evincing the spirit of the true Christian. Judas only was silent, and was the last to make the inquiry, and that after he had been plainly indicated. Ver. 25. Thus showing, 1. That guilt is slow to suspect itself; 2. That it shrinks from the light; 3. That it was the purpose of Judas to conceal his intention; and, 4. That nothing but the consciousness that his Lord knew it could induce him to make inquiry. The guilty would, if possible, always conceal their crimes. The innocent are ready to suspect that they may have done wrong. Their feelings are tender, and they inquire with solicitude whether there may not be something in their bosoms unknown to themselves, that may be a departure from right feeling.

23. *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish.* The Jews, at the observance of this ordinance, used a bitter sauce, made of bunches of raisins, mixed with vinegar and other seasoning of the like kind, which they said represented the clay which their fathers were compelled to use in Egypt, in making brick; thus reminding them of their bitter bondage there. This was probably the dish to which re-

23 And he answered and said, He <sup>2</sup> that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

24 The Son of man goeth as it is written <sup>3</sup> of him: but woe unto

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xli. 9; lv. 12—15. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxii. Isa. liii.

ference is made here. It is not improbable that Judas reclined near to our Saviour at the feast, and by his saying it was one that dipped with him in the dish, he meant one that was near to him, designating him more particularly than he had done before. John adds, ch. xi. 23—30; see Note on that place, that a disciple, i. e. John himself, was reclining on Jesus' bosom; that Simon Peter beckoned to him to ask Jesus more particularly who it was; that Jesus signified who it was, by giving Judas a sop; i. e. a piece of bread or meat, dipped in the thick sauce, and that Judas having received it, went out to accomplish his wicked design of betraying him. Judas was not, therefore, present at the institution of the Lord's supper.

24. *The Son of man goeth.* That is, the Messiah; the Christ. Note, ch. viii. 20. ¶ *Goeth.* Dies, or will die. The Hebrews often spoke in this manner of death. Gen. xv. 2. Psa. xxxix. 13. ¶ *As it is written of him.* That is, as it is written or prophesied of him in the Old Testament. Compare Psa. xli. 9, with John xiii. 18. See also Isa. liii. 4—9. Dan. ix. 26, 27. Luke, ch. xxii. 22, says, "as it was determined." In the Greek, as it was marked out by a boundary; that is, in the divine purpose. It was the previous intention of God to give him up to die for sin, or it could not have been certainly predicted. It is also declared to have been by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge. Acts ii. 23. ¶ *Woe unto that man, &c.* The crime is great and awful, and he will be punished accordingly. He states the greatness of his misery in the phrase following. ¶ *It had been good, &c.* That is, it would have been better for him if he had not been born; or it would be better now for him if he was to be as if he had not been born, or if he was annihilated. This was a proverbial mode of speaking among the Jews in frequent use. In relation to Judas it proves the following things: 1. That the crime which

that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! <sup>1</sup> it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxvii. 3—5. Psa. lv. 15, 23.

he was about to commit was exceedingly great. 2. That the misery or punishment due to it would certainly come upon him. 3. That he would certainly deserve that misery, or it would not be threatened or inflicted. And 4. That his punishment would be eternal. If there should be any period when the sufferings of Judas should end, and he be restored and raised to heaven, the blessings of that happiness without end would infinitely overbalance all the sufferings he will endure in a limited time; and consequently it would not be true that it would be better for him not to have been born. Existence to him would be a blessing. It follows that in relation to one wicked man, the sufferings of hell will be eternal. If of one, then it is equally certain and proper that all the wicked will perish for ever.

If it be asked how this crime of Judas could be so great, or could be a crime at all, when it was determined beforehand that the Saviour should be betrayed and die in this manner, it may be answered: 1. That the crime was what it was in itself, apart from any determination of God. It was a violation of all the duties Judas owed to God, and to the Lord Jesus; awful ingratitude, detestable covetousness, and most base treachery. As such it deserved to be punished. 2. The previous purpose of God did not force Judas to do this. In it he acted freely. He did just what his wicked heart prompted him to do. 3. A previous knowledge of a thing, or a previous purpose to permit a thing, does not alter its nature, or cause it to be a different thing from what it is. 4. God, who is the best judge of the nature of crime, holds all that was done in crucifying the Saviour, though it was by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, to be by wicked hands. Acts ii. 23. This punishment of Judas proves also that sinners cannot take shelter for their sins in the decrees of God, or plead them as an excuse. God will punish crimes for what they are in themselves. His own deep and inscrutable purposes in regard

it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> as they were eating. Jesus took bread, and <sup>3</sup> blessed it,

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23—25. <sup>3</sup> Many Greek copies have, gave thanks. Mark vi. 41.

to human actions will not change the nature of those actions, or screen the sinner from the punishment which he deserves.

25. *Thou hast said.* That is, thou hast said the truth. It is so. Thou art the man. Compare ver. 64 of this chapter with Mark xiv. 62.

26—30. See also Mark xiv. 22—26. Luke xxii. 15—20. 1 Cor. xi. 23—25.

26. *As they were eating.* As they were eating the paschal supper, near the close of the meal. Luke adds, that he said, just before instituting the sacramental supper, “with desire, have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” This is a Hebrew manner of expression, signifying I have greatly desired. He had desired it, doubtless, 1. That he might institute the supper, to be a perpetual memorial of him. 2. That he might strengthen them for their approaching trials. 3. That he might explain to them the true nature of the passover. And, 4. That he might spend another season with them in the duties of religion, of worship. Every Christian about to die, will also seek opportunities of drawing specially near to God, and of holding communion with him, and with his people. ¶ *Jesus took bread.* That is, the unleavened bread which they used at the celebration of the passover, made into thin cakes, easily broken and distributed. ¶ *And blessed it.* Or sought a blessing on it; or gave thanks to God for it. The word rendered *blessed*, not unfrequently means to give thanks. Compare Luke ix. 16, and John vi. 11. It is also to be remarked, that some manuscripts have the word rendered gave thanks, instead of the one translated *blessed*. It appears from the writings of Philo, and the Rabbins, that the Jews were never accustomed to eat without giving thanks to God, and seeking his blessing. This was especially the case in both the bread and the wine used at the passover. ¶ *And brake it.* This breaking of the bread represented the sufferings of Jesus about to take

and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.<sup>1</sup>

27 And he took the cup, and

gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;<sup>2</sup>

28 For this is my blood of the new testament,<sup>3</sup> which is

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 24, 25.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16; xl. 25—28. <sup>3</sup> Jer. xxxi. 31.

place—his body broken or wounded for sin. Hence Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 24, adds, “this is my body which is broken for you.” That is, which is about to be broken for you by death, or wounded, pierced, bruised, to make atonement for your sins. ¶ *This is my body.* This represents my body. This broken bread shows the manner in which my body will be broken; or this will serve to call my dying sufferings to your remembrance. It is not meant that his body would be literally broken as the bread was, but that the bread would be a significant emblem or symbol to recall to their remembrance his sufferings. It is not improbable that our Lord pointed to the broken bread, or laid his hands on it, as if he had said, ‘Lo, my body!’ or, ‘Behold my body! that which represents my broken body to you.’ This could not be intended to mean, that that bread was literally his body. It was not. His body was then before them living. And there is no greater absurdity than to imagine his living body there changed at once to death, and then the bread to be changed into that dead body, and all the while the living body of Jesus was before them. Yet this is the absurd and impossible doctrine of the Roman catholics, holding that the bread and wine were literally changed into the body and blood of our Lord. This was a common mode of speaking among the Jews, and exactly similar to that used by Moses at the institution of the passover. Exod. xii. 11. “It,” i.e. the lamb, “is the Lord’s passover.” That is, the lamb and the feast, represent the Lord’s passing over the houses of the Israelites. It serves to remind you of it. It surely cannot be meant that that lamb was the literal passing over their houses—a palpable absurdity—but that it represented it. So Paul and Luke say of the bread, “this is my body broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.” This expresses the whole design of the sacramental bread. It is to call to remembrance in

a vivid manner the dying sufferings of our Lord. The sacred writers, moreover, often denote that one thing is represented by another by using the word is. See ch. xiii. 37. “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;” i.e. represents the Son of man. Gen. xli. 26. “The seven good kine are seven years;” i.e. represent or signify seven years. See also Gen. xvii. 10. John xv. 1, 5. The meaning of this important passage may be thus expressed: As I gave this broken bread to you to eat, so will I deliver my body to be afflicted and slain for your sins.

27. *And he took the cup.* That is, the cup of wine which they used at the feast of the passover, called the cup of Hallel, or praise, because they commenced then repeating the psalms with which they closed the passover. See Ver. 30. This cup, Luke says, he took after supper. That is, after they had finished the ordinary celebration of eating the passover. The bread was taken while they were eating, the cup after they had done eating. ¶ *And gave thanks.* See on ver. 26. ¶ *Drink ye all of it.* That is, ‘all of you, disciples, drink of it;’ not ‘drink all the wine.’

28. *For this is my blood.* This represents my blood: as the bread did his body. Luke and Paul vary the expression, adding what Matthew and Mark have omitted. “This cup is the new testament in my blood.” By this cup, he meant the wine in the cup, and not the cup itself. Pointing to it, probably, he said, ‘this wine represents my blood about to be shed.’ The phrase, *new testament*, should have been rendered new covenant, referring to the covenant or compact that God was about to make with men through a Redeemer. The old covenant was that which was made with the Jews by the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifices. See Exod. xxiv. 8. “And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you,” &c. In allusion to that, Jesus says, this

shed for many for the remission of sins.<sup>1</sup>

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v. 15, 19. Eph. i. 7.

cup is the *new covenant* in my blood; that is ratified, or sealed and sanctioned by my blood. Anciently, covenants or contracts were ratified by slaying an animal; by the shedding of its blood, imprecating similar vengeance if either party failed in the compact. So Jesus says the covenant which God is about to form with men, the new covenant, or the gospel economy, is sealed or ratified with his blood. ¶ *Which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* In order that sins may be remitted, or forgiven. That is, this is the appointed way, by which God will pardon transgressions. That blood is efficacious for the pardon of sin; 1. Because it is the life of Jesus; the blood being used by the sacred writers as representing life itself, or as containing the elements of life. Gen. ix. 4. Lev. xvii. 14. It was forbidden, therefore, to eat blood, because it contained the life, or was the life, of the animal. When, therefore, Jesus says his blood was shed for many, it is the same as saying that his life was given for many. See Note on Rom. iii. 25. 2. His life was given for sinners, or he died in the place of sinners, as their substitute. By his death on the cross, the death, or punishment due to them in hell may be removed, and their souls be saved. He endured so much suffering, bore so much agony, that God was pleased to accept it in the place of the eternal torments of all the redeemed. The interests of justice, the honour and stability of his government, would be as secure in saving them in this manner, as if the suffering were inflicted on them personally in hell. God, by giving his Son to die for sinners, has shown his infinite abhorrence of sin: since, according to his view, and, therefore, according to truth, nothing else would show its evil nature, but the awful sufferings of his own Son. That he died in the stead or place of sinners, is abundantly clear from the following passages of scripture: Isa. liii. 10. John i. 29. Rom. viii. 33. 2 Cor. v. 15. Eph. v. 2. Heb. vii. 27. 1 John ii. 2; iv. 10.

drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.<sup>2</sup>

30 And when they had sung an<sup>3</sup> hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxv. 6. <sup>3</sup> Or, psalm.

29. *But I say unto you, &c.* That is, the observance of the passover, and of the rites shadowing forth future things, here end. I am about to die. The design of all these types and shadows is about to be accomplished. This is the last time that I shall partake of them with you. Hereafter, when my Father's kingdom is established in heaven, we will partake together of the thing represented by these types and ceremonial observances; the blessings and triumphs of redemption. ¶ *Fruit of the vine.* Wine, the fruit or produce of the vine, made of the grapes of the vine. ¶ *Until that day.* Probably the time when they should be received to heaven. It does not mean here on earth, further than that they would partake with him in the happiness of spreading the gospel, and the triumphs of his kingdom. ¶ *When I drink it new with you.* Not that he would partake with them of literal wine there, but in the thing represented by it. Wine was an important part of the feast of the passover, and of all feasts.

The kingdom of heaven is often represented under the image of a feast. It means that he will partake of joy with them in heaven; that they will share together the honours and happiness of the heavenly world. ¶ *New.* In a new manner; or, perhaps, afresh. ¶ *In my Father's kingdom.* In heaven. The place where God shall reign in a kingdom fully established and pure.

30. *And when they had sung an hymn.* At the passover the Jews were wont to sing or chant Psalms cxiii., cxiv., cxv., cxvi., cxvii., and cxviii. These they divided into two parts. Psalms cxiii. and cxiv. they sang during the observance of the passover, and the others at the close. There can be no doubt that our Saviour, and the apostles also, used the same psalms in their observance of the passover. The word rendered *sung an hymn*, is a participle, literally meaning *hymning*, not confined to a single hymn, but admitting many. ¶ *Mount of Olives.* See Note, ch. xxi. 1.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, <sup>1</sup> I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiii. 7.

31—35. Jesus foretells the fall of Peter. This is also recorded in Mark xiv. 27—31. Luke xxii. 31—34. John xiii. 36—38.

31. *Then said Jesus unto them, &c.* The occasion of his saying this was Peter's bold affirmation that he was ready to die with him. John xiii. 37. Jesus had told them that he was going away, i. e., was about to die. Peter asked him whither he was going. Jesus replied, that he could not follow then, but should afterwards. Peter, not satisfied with that, said that he was ready to lay down his life for him. Jesus then distinctly informed them that all of them would leave him that night. ¶ *All ye shall be offended because of me.* See Note, ch. v. 29. It means, here, you will all stumble at my being taken, abused, and set at nought; you will be ashamed to own me as a teacher, and to acknowledge yourselves as my disciples. Or, my being betrayed will prove a snare to you all, so that you shall be guilty of the sin of forsaking me, and by your conduct, of denying me. ¶ *For it is written, &c.* See Zech. xiii. 7. This is affirmed here to have reference to the Saviour, and to be fulfilled in him. ¶ *I will smite.* This is the language of God, the Father. *I will smite,* means either that I will give him up to be smitten, comp. Exod. iv. 21, with viii. 15, &c.; or that I will do it myself. Both of these things were done. God gave him up to the Jews and Romans, to be smitten for the sins of the world, Rom. viii. 32, and he himself left him to deep and awful sorrows, to bear the burden of the world's atonement alone. See Mark xv. 34. ¶ *The Shepherd.* The Lord Jesus, the Shepherd of his people. John x. 11, 14. Comp. Note on Isa. xl. 11. ¶ *The sheep.* This means here particularly the apostles. It also refers sometimes to all the followers of Jesus, the friends of God. Psa. c. 3. John x. 16. ¶ *Shall be scattered abroad.*

32 But after I am risen again, <sup>2</sup> I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xxviii. 7, 10, 16.

This refers to their fleeing, and was fulfilled in that. See ver. 56.

32. *But after I am risen, &c.* This promise was given them to encourage and support them, and also to give them an indication where he might be found. He did not mean that he would first appear to some of them, but that he would meet them all in Galilee. This was done. See ch. xxviii. 16. Mark xvi. 7. ¶ *Galilee.* See Note, ch. ii. 22.

33. *Peter answered—though all, &c.* The word *men* is improperly inserted here by the translators. Peter meant only to affirm this of the disciples. This confidence of Peter was entirely characteristic. He was ardent, sincere, and really attached to his Master. Yet this declaration was made evidently, 1. From true love to Jesus. 2. From too much reliance on his own strength. 3. From ignorance of himself, and of the trials which he was soon to pass through. And it most impressively teaches us, 1. That no strength of attachment to Jesus can justify such confident promises of fidelity, made without dependence on him. 2. That all promises to adhere to him, should be made relying on him for aid. 3. That we little know how feeble we are, till we are tried. 4. That Christians may be left to great and disgraceful sins to show them their weakness.

Luke adds, that Jesus said to Peter, that Satan had desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat; that he might thoroughly try him. But Jesus says that he had prayed for him that his faith should not fail, and charged him when he was converted, i. e. when he was turned from this sin, to strengthen his brethren, i. e. by teaching them to take warning by his example. See Note on Luke xxii. 30—33.

34. *This night.* This was in the evening when this was spoken, after the observance of the passover, and we may suppose near nine o'clock. ¶ *Before the cock crow.* Mark



*The prayer in the garden.* MATTHEW.

A.D. 38.

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.<sup>1</sup> Likewise also said all the disciples.

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxviii. 14. 1 Cor. x. 12.

and Luke add, before the cock crow twice. The cock is accustomed to crow twice, once at midnight, and once in the morning at break of day. The latter was commonly called cock-crowing. See Mark xiii. 35. This was the time familiarly known as the cock-crowing, and of this Matthew and John speak, without referring to the other. Mark and Luke speak of the second crowing, and mean the same time; so that there is no contradiction between them. ¶ *Deny me thrice.* That is, as Luke adds, deny that thou knowest me. See ver. 74.

35. *Will not deny thee.* Will not deny my connexion with thee, or that I knew thee. All the disciples said the same thing, and all fled at the approach of danger, forsaking their Master and Friend, and practically denying that they knew him. Ver. 56.

36—45. The agony of Jesus in Gethsemane. This account is also recorded in Mark xiv. 32—42. Luke xxii. 39—46. John xviii. 1.

36. *Then cometh, &c.* After the institution of the supper, in the early part of the night, he went out to the mount of Olives. In his journey he passed over the brook Cedron, John xviii. 1, which bounded Jerusalem on the east. ¶ *To a place.* John calls this a garden. This garden was evidently on the western side of the mount of Olives, a short distance from Jerusalem, and commanding a full view of the city. It is doubted whether the word rendered garden means a villa, or country seat, or a garden, properly so called. It is probable that it might include both: a cluster of houses, or a small village in which was a garden. The word here means not properly a garden for the cultivation of vegetables, but a place planted with the olive and other trees, perhaps with a fountain of waters, and with walks and groves; a proper place of refreshment in a hot climate,

36 ¶ Then <sup>2</sup> cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee,<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>2</sup> Mark xiv. 32—42. Luke xxii. 39—46. John xviii. 1. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvii. 1. Mark. v. 37.

and of retirement from the noise of the adjacent city. Such places were doubtless common in the vicinity of Jerusalem. Messrs. Fisk and King, American missionaries, who were there in 1823, tell us that the garden is about a stone's cast from the brook of Cedron; that it now contains eight large and venerable looking olives, whose trunks show their great antiquity. The spot is sandy and barren, and appears like a forsaken place. A low broken wall surrounds it. Mr. K. sat down beneath one of the trees, and read Isa. liii., and also the gospel history of our Redeemer's sorrow during that memorable night in which he was there betrayed; and the interest of the association was heightened by the passing through the place of a party of Bedouins, armed with spears and swords. Jesus, in the silence of the night, free from interruption, made it a place of retirement and prayer.

Luke says, he went as he was wont, i. e. accustomed, to the mount of Olives. Probably he had been in the habit of retiring from Jerusalem to that place for meditation and prayer; thus enforcing by his example what he had so often urged by his precepts, the duty of retiring from the noise and bustle of the world to hold communion with God. ¶ *Gethsemane.* This word is made up either of two Hebrew words, signifying valley of fatness, i. e. a fertile valley; or of two words, signifying an olive press, given to it probably because the place was filled with olives. ¶ *Sit ye here.* That is, in one part of the garden to which they first came. ¶ *While I go and pray yonder.* That is, at the distance of a stone's cast. Luke xxii. 41. Luke adds, that when he came to the garden, he charged them to pray that they might not enter into temptation; i. e., into deep trials and afflictions, or more probably into scenes and dangers that would tempt them to deny him.

37. And he took with him Peter, and

began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, My <sup>1</sup> soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little farther,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxvi. 2. Isa. lili. 3, 10. John xli. 27.

*the two sons of Zebedee.* That is, James and John. Ch. x. 2. On two other occasions he had favoured these disciples in a particular manner, suffering them to go with him to witness his power and glory, viz., at the healing of the ruler's daughter, Luke viii. 51, and at his transfiguration on the mount. Matt. xvii. 1. ¶ *Sorrowful.* Affected with grief. ¶ *Very heavy.* The word in the original is much stronger than the one translated sorrowful. It means, to be pressed down, or overwhelmed with great anguish. This was produced, doubtless, by a foresight of his great sufferings on the cross in making an atonement for the sins of men.

38. *My soul is exceeding sorrowful.* His human nature—his soul—was much and deeply affected and pressed down. ¶ *Even unto death.* This denotes extreme sorrow and agony. The sufferings of death are the greatest of which we have any knowledge; they are the most feared and dreaded by man; and those sufferings are, therefore, put for extreme and indescribable anguish. The meaning may be thus expressed: My sorrows are so great, that under their burden I am ready to die; such is the anxiety of mind, that I seem to bear the pains of death! ¶ *Tarry ye here and watch with me.* The word rendered *watch*, means literally to abstain from sleep; then to be vigilant; to guard against danger. Here it seems to mean, to sympathize with him; to unite with him in seeking divine support; and to prepare themselves for approaching dangers.

39. *And he went a little farther.* That is, at the distance that a man could conveniently cast a stone. (Luke). ¶ *Fell on his face.* Luke says, "he kneeled down." He did both. He first kneeled, and then in the fervency of his prayer, and the depth of his sorrow, he fell with his face on the ground, denoting the

and fell on his face, and <sup>2</sup> prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup <sup>3</sup> pass from me nevertheless <sup>4</sup> not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and

<sup>2</sup> Heb. v. 7. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xx. 22. <sup>4</sup> John v. 30; vi. 38. Rom. xv. 3. Phil. ii. 8.

deepest anguish, and the most earnest entreaty. This was the usual posture of prayer in times of great earnestness. See Num. xvi. 22. 2 Chron. xx. 18. Neh. viii. 6. ¶ *If it be possible.* That is, if the world can be redeemed; if it be consistent with justice, and with maintaining the government of the universe, that men should be saved without this extremity of sorrow, let it be done. There is no doubt that if it had been possible, it would have been done; and the fact that these sufferings were not removed, that the Saviour went forward and bore them without mitigation, shows that it was not consistent with the justice of God, and with the welfare of the universe, that men should be saved without the awful sufferings of such an atonement. ¶ *Let this cup.* These bitter sufferings. These approaching trials. The word *cup* is often used in this sense, denoting sufferings. See Note, ch. xx. 22. ¶ *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.* As Jesus was man, as well as God, there is nothing inconsistent in supposing that, like a man, he was deeply affected in view of these sorrows. When he speaks of his will, he expresses what human nature, in view of such great sufferings, would desire. It naturally shrank from them, and sought deliverance. Yet he sought to do the will of God. He chose rather that the high purpose of God should be done, than that that purpose should be abandoned, and regard be shown to the fears of his human nature. In this he has left a model of prayer in all times of affliction. It is right, in times of calamity, to seek deliverance. Like the Saviour, also, in such seasons, we should, we must submit cheerfully to the will of God, confident that, in all these trials, he is wise, and merciful, and good.

40. *And findeth them asleep.* It may seem remarkable that, in such circum-

saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch <sup>1</sup> and pray, that ye <sup>2</sup> enter not into temptation: <sup>3</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiii. 33; xiv. 38. Luke xxii. 40. Eph. vi. 18. Rev. xvi. 15. <sup>2</sup> Prov. iv. 14, 15. <sup>3</sup> Rev. iii. 10.

stances, with a suffering, pleading Redeemer near, surrounded by danger, and having received a special charge to watch, i. e. not to sleep, they should so soon have fallen asleep. It is frequently supposed that this was proof of wonderful stupidity, and indifference to their Lord's sufferings. The truth is, however, that it was just the reverse; it was proof of their great attachment, and their deep sympathy in his sorrows. Luke has added, that he found them sleeping for sorrow. That is, on account of their sorrow: their grief was so great, that they naturally fell asleep. Multitudes of facts might be brought to show that this is in accordance with the regular effects of grief. Dr. Rush says, "There is another symptom of grief, which is not often noticed, and that is profound sleep. I have often witnessed it even in mothers, immediately after the death of a child. Criminals, we are told by Mr. Akerman, keeper of Newgate in London, often sleep soundly the night before their execution. The son of general Custine slept nine hours the night before he was led to the guillotine in Paris." *Diseases of the Mind*, p. 319. ¶ *Saith unto Peter*, &c. This reproof was administered to Peter particularly, on account of his warm professions, his rash zeal, and his self-confidence. If he could not keep awake and watch with the Saviour for one hour, how little probability was there that he would adhere to him in all the trials through which he was soon to pass!

41. *Watch*. See ver. 38. Greater trials are coming on. It is necessary, therefore, still to be on your guard. ¶ *And pray*. Seek aid from God by supplication in view of the thickening calamities. ¶ *That ye enter not into temptation*. That ye be not overcome and oppressed with these trials of your faith, so as to deny me. The word *temptation* here properly means, what would try their faith in the approaching calamities, his rejection and death. It

spirit <sup>4</sup> indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass

<sup>4</sup> Rom. vii. 18—25. Gal. v. 17.

would try their faith, because though they supposed he was the Messiah, they were not very clearly aware of the necessity of his death; they did not fully understand that he was to rise again. They had cherished the belief that he was to establish a kingdom while he lived. When they should see him, therefore, rejected, tried, crucified, dead; when they should see him submit to all this, as if he had not power to deliver himself, then would be the trial of their faith; and in view of it, he exhorted them to pray that they might not so enter temptation as to be overcome by it, and fall. ¶ *The spirit indeed is willing, &c.* The mind, the disposition is ready, and disposed to bear these trials, but the flesh, the natural feelings, through the fear of danger, is weak, and will be likely to lead you astray when the trial comes. Though you may have strong faith, and believe now that you will not deny me, yet human nature is weak, shrinks at trials, and you should, therefore, seek strength from on high. This was not intended for an apology for their sleeping, but to excite them, notwithstanding he knew that they loved him, to be on their guard lest the weakness of human nature should be insufficient to sustain them in the hour of their temptation.

42—44. It is probable that our Lord spent considerable time in prayer, and that the evangelists have recorded rather the substance of his petitions than the very words. He returned repeatedly to his disciples, doubtless to caution them against danger; to show the deep interest which he had in their welfare; and to show them the extent of his sufferings on their behalf. Each time that he returned, these sorrows deepened. Again he sought the place of prayer, and as his approaching sufferings overwhelmed him, this was the burden of his prayer, and he prayed the same words. Luke adds, that amidst his agonies, an angel appeared from heaven strengthening him. His

away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them

asleep again : for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went

human nature began to sink, as unequal to his sufferings, and a messenger from heaven appeared, to support him in these heavy trials. It may seem strange, that since Jesus was divine, John i. 1, the divine nature did not minister strength to the human, and that he that was God should receive strength from an angel. But it should be remembered, that Jesus came in his human nature, not only to make an atonement, but to be a perfect example of a holy man; that as such, it was necessary to submit to the common conditions of humanity, that he should live as other men, be sustained as other men, suffer as other men, and be strengthened as other men; that he should, so to speak, take no advantage in favour of his piety, from his divinity, but submit, in all things, to the common lot of pious men. Hence he supplied his wants, not by his being divine, but in the ordinary way of human life: hence he preserved himself from danger, not as God, but by seeking the usual ways of human prudence and precaution; hence he met trials as a man; he received comfort as a man; and there is no absurdity in supposing that, in accordance with the condition of his people, his human nature should be strengthened as they are, by those who are sent forth to be ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation. Heb. i. 14.

Luke further adds, ch. xxii. 44, that being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. The word *agony* is taken from the anxiety, fear, effort, and strong emotion of the wrestlers in the Greek games, about to engage in a mighty struggle. Here it denotes the extreme anguish of mind; the strong conflict produced between sinking human nature and the prospect of deep and overwhelming calamities. ¶ *Great drops of blood.* Luke xxii. 44. The word here rendered *great drops* does not mean drops gently falling on the ground, but rather thick and clammy masses of gore, pressed by inward agony through the skin, and, mixing with the sweat, falling thus to the ground. It has been doubted by some whether the

sacred writer meant to say that there was actually blood in this sweat, or only that the sweat was in the form of great drops. The natural meaning is, doubtless, that the blood was mingled with his sweat; that it fell profusely, falling masses of gore; that it was pressed out by his inward anguish; and that this was caused in some way in view of his approaching death. This effect of extreme sufferings, of mental anguish, has been known in several other instances. Bloody sweats have been mentioned by many writers as caused by extreme suffering. Dr. Doddridge says, Note on Luke xxii. 44, that "Aristotle and Diodorus Siculus both mention bloody sweats, as attending some extraordinary agony of mind; and I find Loti, in his life of Pope Sixtus V., and Sir John Chardin, in his history of Persia, mentioning a like phenomenon, to which Dr. Jackson adds another from Thuanus." It has been objected to this account, that it is improbable, and that such an event could not occur. The instances, however, which are referred to by Doddridge and others, show sufficiently that the objection is unfounded. In addition to these, I may observe, that Voltaire has himself narrated a fact which ought for ever to stop the mouths of infidels. Speaking of Charles IX., of France, in his Universal History, he says, "He died in his thirty-fifth year; his disorder was of a very remarkable kind; the blood oozed out of all his pores. This malady, of which there have been other instances, was owing to either excessive fear, or violent agitation, or to a feverish and melancholy temperament."

Various opinions have been given of the probable cause of these sorrows of the Saviour. Some have thought it was a strong shrinking from the manner of dying on the cross, or from an apprehension of being forsaken there by the Father; others that Satan was permitted in a peculiar manner to try him, and to fill his mind with horrors, having departed from him at the beginning of his ministry for a season, Luke iv. 12, only to renew his temptations in a more dreadful manner now; and others that these sufferings

away again, and prayed the third <sup>1</sup> time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your rest*; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 8.

were sent upon him as the wrath of God manifested against sin, that God inflicted them directly upon him by his own hand, to show his abhorrence of the sins of men, for which he was about to die. Where the scriptures are silent about the cause, it does not become us confidently to express an opinion. We may suppose, perhaps, without presumption, that a part or all these things were combined to produce this awful suffering. There is no need of supposing that there was a single thing that produced it; but it is rather probable that this was a rush of feeling from every quarter, his situation, his approaching death, the temptations of the enemy, and the awful suffering on account of men's sins, and God's hatred of it about to be manifested in his own death, all coming upon his soul at once, sorrow flowing in from every quarter, the concentration of the sufferings of the atonement pouring together upon him, and filling him with unspeakable anguish.

45. *Sleep on now and take your rest.* Most interpreters have supposed that this should be translated as a question, rather than a command. *Do you sleep now, and take your rest?* Is this a time, amidst so much danger, and so many enemies, to give yourselves to sleep? This construction is strongly countenanced by Luke xxii. 46, where the expression, *Why sleep ye?* evidently refers to the same point of time. There is no doubt that the Greek will bear this construction, and in this way the apparent inconsistency will be removed between this command, to sleep, and that in the next verse, to rise and be going. Others suppose that, his agony being over, and the necessity of watching with him being now past, he kindly permitted them to seek repose till they should be roused by the coming of the traitor; that, while they slept, Jesus continued still awake; that some considerable time elapsed between what was *spoken here* and in the next verse; and

man is betrayed into the hand of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. <sup>2</sup>

47 ¶ And while he yet spake,

<sup>2</sup> Luke ix. 51; xii. 50. John x. 18; xviii. 1-8.

that Jesus suffered them to sleep until he saw Judas coming, and then aroused them. Others have supposed that he spoke this in irony: *Sleep on now, if you can; take rest, if possible, in such dangers, and at such a time.* But this supposition is unworthy the Saviour and the occasion. Mark adds, "it is enough." That is, sufficient time has been given to sleep. It is time to arise and be going. ¶ *The hour is at hand.* The time when the Son of man is to be betrayed is near. ¶ *Sinners.* Judas, the Roman soldiers, and the Jews.

46. *Rise, let us be going.* That is, probably, with them. Let us go whosoever they shall lead us. The time when I must die is come. It is no longer proper to attempt an escape.

47—57. The account of Jesus' being betrayed by Judas is recorded by all the evangelists. See Mark xiv. 43—52. Luke xxii. 47—53. John xviii. 2—12.

47. *Judas, one of the twelve, came.* This was done while he was addressing his disciples. John informs us that Judas knew the place, because Jesus was in the habit of going there with his disciples. Judas had passed the time, after he left Jesus and the other disciples at the passover, in arranging matters with the Jews, collecting the band, and preparing to go. Perhaps, also, on this occasion they gave him the money which they had promised. ¶ *A great multitude with swords and staves.* John says, that he had received a band of men and officers from the chief priests, &c. Josephus says, Ant. lib. xx. cap. iv., that at the festival of the passover, when a great multitude of people came to observe the feast, lest there should be any disorder, a band of men was commanded to keep watch at the porches of the temple, to repress a tumult, if any should be excited. This band, or guard was at the disposal of the chief priests. Matt. xxvii. 65. It was composed of Roman soldiers, and was

lo, <sup>1</sup> Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, <sup>2</sup> saying, Whom-

<sup>1</sup> Acts i. 16.    <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxxviii. 12.

stationed chiefly at the tower of Antonia, at the north-west side of the temple. In addition to this, they had constant guards stationed around the temple, composed of Levites. The Roman soldiers were armed with swords. The other persons that went out carried probably whatever was accessible as a weapon. These were the persons sent by the priests to apprehend Jesus. Perhaps other desperate men might have joined them. ¶ *Staves*. In the original, wood; used here in the plural number. It means rather clubs or sticks, than spears. It does not mean staves. Probably it means any weapon at hand, such as a mob can conveniently collect. John says, that they had lanterns and torches. The passover was celebrated at the full moon. But this night might have been cloudy. The place to which they were going was also shaded with trees; and lights, therefore, might be necessary.

48. *Gave them a sign*. That is, told them of a way by which they might know whom to apprehend, i. e., by his kissing him. It was night. Jesus was, besides, probably personally unknown to the Romans, perhaps to the others also. Judas, therefore, being well acquainted with him, to prevent the possibility of mistake, agreed to designate him by one of the tokens of friendship.

John tells us, that Jesus, knowing all things that should come upon him, when they approached him, asked them whom they sought? and that they replied, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus informed them that he was the person they sought. They, when they heard it, overawed by his presence, and smitten with the consciousness of guilt, went backward, and fell to the ground. He again asked them whom they sought. They made the same declaration: Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus then, since they professed to seek only

soever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed <sup>3</sup> him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, <sup>4</sup> Friend, wherefore art thou come?

<sup>3</sup> 2 Sam. iii. 27; xx. 9. Psa. xxviii. 3. <sup>4</sup> Psa. xli. 9; lv. 13.

him, claimed the right that his disciples should be suffered to escape;—"that the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, John xvii. 12: Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none."

49. *Hail, Master*. The word translated *Hail*, here, means, to rejoice, to have joy; and also to have cause of joy. It thus expresses the joy which one friend has when he meets another, especially after an absence. It was used by the Jews and Greeks as a mode of salutation among friends. It would here seem to express the joy of Judas at finding his Master, and again being with him. ¶ *Master*. In the original, *Rabbi*. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 7. ¶ *Kissed him*. Gave him the common salutation of friends, when meeting after absence. This mode of salutation was more common among eastern nations than with us.

50. *And Jesus said unto him, Friend*. It seems strange to us that Jesus should give the endeared name friend to a man that he knew was his enemy, and that was about to betray him. It should be remarked, however, that this is the fault of our language, not of the original. In the Greek there are two words which our translators have rendered *friend*: one implying affection and regard, the other not. One is properly rendered friend, the other expresses more nearly what we mean by companion. It is this latter word which is given to the disaffected labourer in the vineyard: "Friend, I do thee no wrong;" Matt. xx. 13; to the guest which had not on the wedding garment, in the parable of the marriage feast, Matt. xxii. 12; and to Judas in this place. ¶ *Wherefore art thou come?* This was said, not because he was ignorant why he had come, but probably to fill the mind of Judas with the consciousness of his crime, and by a striking question to compel him to think of what he was doing.

Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear.<sup>1</sup>

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for <sup>2</sup> all they that take

<sup>1</sup> Luke ix. 55; xxii. 36—38, 49—51. \* Gen. ix. 6. Ezek. xxxv. 5, 6. Rev. xxiii. 10.

51. *One of them which were with Jesus.* John informs us that this was Peter. The other evangelists concealed the name, probably because they wrote while Peter was living, and it might have endangered Peter to have it known. ¶ *And drew his sword.* The apostles were not commonly armed. On this occasion they had provided two swords. Luke xxii. 38. In seasons of danger, when travelling through the country, they were under a necessity of providing means of defending themselves against the robbers that infested the country. This will account for their having any swords in their possession. See Note on Luke x. 30. These swords, Josephus informs us, the people were accustomed to carry under their garments, as they went up to Jerusalem. ¶ *A servant of the high priest.* His name, John informs us, was Malchus. Luke adds, that Jesus touched the ear, and healed it; thus showing his benevolence to his foes when they sought his life, and giving them proof that they were attacking Him that was sent from heaven.

52. *Thy sword into his place.* Into the sheath. ¶ *For all they which take the sword, &c.* This passage is capable of different significations. 1. They who resist by the sword the civil magistrate, shall be punished; and it is dangerous, therefore, to oppose those who come with the authority of the civil ruler. 2. These men, Jews and Romans, who have taken the sword against the innocent shall perish by the sword. God will take vengeance on them. But, 3. The most satisfactory interpretation is that which regards it as a caution to Peter. Peter was rash. Alone he had attacked the

the sword shall perish with the sword.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of <sup>3</sup> angels?

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that <sup>4</sup> thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus

<sup>3</sup> Ch. lv. 11. <sup>2</sup> Kin. vi. 17. Dan. vii. 10. <sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv. 26, 46.

whole band. Jesus told him that his unseasonable and imprudent defence might be the occasion of his own destruction. His zeal was likely to endanger his life, for they who took the sword perished by it. This was probably a proverb, denoting that they who engaged in war commonly perished there.

53. *Thinkest thou, &c.* Jesus says, that not only would Peter endanger himself, but his resistance implied a distrust of the protection of God, and was an improper resistance of his will. If it had been proper that they should be rescued, God could easily have furnished far more efficient aid than that of Peter; a mighty host of angels. ¶ *Twelve legions.* A legion was a division of the Roman army, amounting to more than six thousand men. See Note, ch. viii. 29. The number *twelve* was mentioned, perhaps, in reference to the number of his apostles, and himself; Judas being away, but eleven disciples remained. God could guard him and each disciple with a legion of angels; that is, God could easily protect him, if he should pray to him, and if it was his will.

54. *But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, &c.* That is, the scriptures which foretold of his dying for the world. In some way that must be accomplished; and the time had come when, having finished the work which the Father gave him to do, it was proper that he should submit to a cruel death. This was said doubtless to comfort his disciples; to show them that his death was not a matter of surprise or disappointment to him; and, that they, therefore, should not be offended and forsake him.

55. *Against a thief.* Rather, a robber.

to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.<sup>1</sup>

56 But all this was done, that the scriptures<sup>2</sup> of the prophets

<sup>1</sup> Mark xii. 35. John xviii. 20, 21. <sup>2</sup> Gen. iii. 15. Psa. xxii.; lxi. Isa. liii. Lam. iv. 20. Dan. ix. 24, 26. Zech. xiii. 7. Acts i. 16.

This is the manner in which they would have sought to take a highwayman of desperate character, and armed to defend his life. It adds not a little to the depth of his humiliation, that he consented to be hunted down thus by wicked men, and to be treated as if he had been the worst of mankind. ¶ *Daily with you in the temple.* For many days before the pass-over, as recorded in the previous chapter.

56. *Scriptures of the prophets.* The writings of the prophets, for this is the meaning of the word scriptures. He alludes to those parts of the prophets which foretold his sufferings and death. ¶ *Then all the disciples, &c.* Overcome with fear, when they saw their Master actually taken; alarmed with the terrific appearance of armed men, and torches in a dark night; and forgetting their promises not to forsake him, they all left their Saviour to go alone. Alas! how many, when attachment to Christ would lead them to danger, leave him, and also flee! Mark adds, that after the disciples had fled, a young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body attempted to follow him. Probably he was the owner of the garden, and a friend of Jesus. Aroused by the noise from his repose, he came to defend the Saviour. He cast, in his hurry, a garment at hand round his body, and came to him. The young men among the Romans and Jews attempted to secure him also; but he escaped from them and fled. See Note on Mark xiv. 50, 51.

57—75. The trial of our Lord before the council, and the denial of Peter happening at the same time, might be related one before the other, according to the evangelists' pleasure. Accordingly, Matthew and Mark relate the trial first, and Peter's denial afterwards; Luke mentions the denial first, and John has probably observed the natural order. The parallel

might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 ¶ And<sup>3</sup> they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar

<sup>3</sup> Mark xiv. 53—55. Luke xxii. 54. John xviii. 12, 13.

places are recorded in Mark xiv. 53—72. Luke xxii. 54—71; and John xviii. 13—27.

57. *To Caiaphas.* John says, that they led him first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. This was done, probably, as a mark of respect, he having been high priest, and, perhaps, distinguished for prudence, and capable of advising his son-in-law in a difficult case; and the Saviour was detained there probably until the chief priests and elders were assembled. ¶ *The high priest.* Note, ch. xxvi. 3. John says he was high priest for that year. Annas had been high priest some years before. In the time of our Saviour the office was frequently changed by the civil ruler. This Caiaphas had prophesied that it was expedient that one should die for the people. Note, John xi. 49, 50. ¶ *The scribes and elders.* The men composing the great council of the nation or sanhedrim. Note, ch. v. 22. It is not probable that they could be immediately assembled, and some part of the transaction respecting the denial of Peter probably took place while they were collecting.

58. *Peter followed afar off.* By this he evinced two things: 1. Real attachment to his Master; a desire to be near him, and to witness his trial. 2. Fear respecting his personal safety. He therefore kept so far off as to be out of danger, and yet so near as that he might witness the transactions respecting his Master. Perhaps he expected to be lost and unobserved in the crowd. Many, in this, imitate Peter. They are afraid to follow the Saviour closely. They fear danger, ridicule, or persecution. They follow him, but it is at a great distance; so far that it is difficult to discern that they are in the train, and are his friends at all. Religion requires us to be near to Christ. We may measure our piety by our desire



off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kin. xxi. 9—14. Acts vi. 11—13; xxiv. 5, 6, 13.

to be with him, to be like him, and by our willingness to follow him always; through trials, contempt, persecution, and death. John says, that another disciple went with Peter. By that other disciple is commonly supposed, as he did not mention his name, that he meant himself. He was acquainted with the high priest, and went immediately into the hall. ¶ *Unto the high priest's palace.* The word rendered *palace*, means rather the hall, or middle court or area of his house. It was situated in the centre of the palace, and was commonly uncovered. See Note, ch. ix. 2. ¶ *And went in.* John informs us that he did not go immediately in. But the other disciple, being known to the high priest, went in first, while Peter remained at the gate, or entrance. The other disciple then went out, and brought in Peter. Matthew, Mark, and Luke have omitted this circumstance. John recorded it, probably, because they had omitted it, and because he was the "other disciple" concerned in it. ¶ *Sat with the servants to see the end.* That is, the end of the trial; or to see how it would go with his Master. The other evangelists say that he stood with the servants warming himself. John says, it being cold, they had made a fire of coals, and warmed themselves. It was then probably not far from midnight. The place where they were was uncovered; and travellers say, that though the days are warm in Judea at that season of the year, yet that the nights are often uncomfortably cold. This fire was made in the hall. (Luke). The fire was not in a fire-place, as we commonly suppose, but was probably made of coals laid on the pavement. At this place and time was Peter's first denial of his Lord, as is recorded afterwards. See ver. 69.

59. *False witnesses.* Witnesses that would accuse him of crime; of violation

60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the <sup>2</sup> last came two false witnesses,

61 And said, This fellow said, <sup>3</sup>I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xxvii. 12; xxxv. 11. <sup>3</sup> John ii. 19—21.

of the laws of the land or of God. We are not to suppose that they wished them to be false witnesses. They were indifferent, probably, whether they were true or false, if they could succeed in condemning him. The evangelist calls it false testimony. Before these witnesses were sought, we learn from John xviii. 19—23, that the high priest asked Jesus of his disciples, and his doctrine. Jesus replied, that he had taught openly in the temple, and in secret had said nothing; that is, he had no secret doctrines which he had not been willing openly to teach, and he referred them to those who had heard him. In a firm, dignified manner he put himself on trial, and insisted on his rights, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" This conversation took place probably before the council was assembled, and during this time the denials by Peter occurred. Luke informs us, ch. xxii. 66, that the council came together as soon as it was day; that is, probably near the morning, or not far from break of day, after Peter had denied him, and gone out.

60. *Found none.* That is, they found none on whose testimony they could with any show of reason convict him. The reason was, as Mark says, ch. xiv. 56, that "their witnesses agreed not together." They differed about facts, times, and circumstances, as all false witnesses do. Two witnesses were required by their law, and they did not dare to condemn him without conforming, in appearance at least, to the requirements of the law.

61. *And said, This fellow said, &c.* Mark has recorded this testimony differently. According to him, they said, "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." Probably both forms of giving

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it *which* these witness against thee?

63 But <sup>1</sup> Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure<sup>2</sup> thee by the

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxvii. 12, 14. Isa. lili. 7. <sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. xiv. 24, 28. 1 Kin. xxii. 16.

in the testimony were used on the trial, and Matthew has recorded it as it was given at one time, and Mark at another; so that there is no contradiction. Mark adds, "but neither so did their witnesses agree together." That which they attempted to accuse him of, is what he had said respecting his body, and their destroying it. John ii. 19. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This he spoke of his body; they perverted it, endeavouring to show that he meant the temple at Jerusalem. They neither stated it as it was, nor did they state correctly its meaning; nor did they agree about the words used. It was, therefore, very little to their purpose.

62, 63. *Jesus held his peace.* Was silent. He knew that the evidence did not even appear to amount to any thing worth a reply. He knew that they were aware of that, and that feeling that, the high priest attempted to draw something from him, on which they could condemn him. ¶ *I adjure thee by the living God.* I put thee upon thy oath before God. This was the usual form of putting an oath among the Jews. It implies calling God to witness the truth of what was said. The law respecting witnesses also made it a violation of an oath to conceal any part of the truth; and though our Saviour might have felt that such a question, put in such a manner, was very improper, or was unlawful, yet he also knew that to be silent would be construed into a denial of his being the Christ. The question was probably put in anger. They had utterly failed in their proof. They had no way left to accomplish their purpose of condemning him, but to draw it from his own lips. This cunning question was therefore proposed. The difficulty of the question consisted in this: If he confessed that he was the Son of God,

living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ,<sup>3</sup> the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter<sup>4</sup> shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 16. John i. 34. Dan. vii. 13. John i. 51. <sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 16. Rev. i. 7.

they stood ready to condemn him for blasphemy. If he denied it, they were prepared to condemn him for being an impostor, for deluding the people under the pretence of being the Messiah. ¶ *The living God.* Jehovah is called the living God, in opposition to idols which were without life. ¶ *The Christ.* The Messiah, the Anointed. Note, ch. i. 1. ¶ *The Son of God.* The Jews uniformly expected that the Messiah would be the Son of God. In their view it denoted also that he would be divine, or equal to the Father. John x. 31—36. To claim that title was, therefore, in their view, blasphemy; and as they had determined beforehand, in their own minds, that he was not the Messiah, they were ready at once to accuse him of blasphemy.

64. *Thou hast said.* This is a form of assenting or affirming. Thou hast said the truth; or as Luke has it, ch. xxii. 70, "Ye say that I am." This was not, however, said immediately. Before Jesus acknowledged himself to be the Messiah, he said to them, Luke xxii. 67—69, "If I tell you ye will not believe, and if I ask you"—i. e. propose the proofs of my mission, and require you to give your opinion of them—"ye will not answer me, nor let me go." ¶ *Nevertheless.* This word should have been translated moreover, or furthermore. What follows is designed to explain and give confirmation to what he had said. ¶ *Sitting on the right hand of power.* That is, of God, called here the Power; equivalent to the Mighty, or the Almighty. It denotes dignity and majesty, for to sit at the right hand of a prince was the chief place of honour. See Note, ch. xx. 21. ¶ *Coming in the clouds of heaven.* See Notes, ch. xxiv., xxv. The meaning of this is, you shall see the sign from heaven which you have so often demanded; even the Messiah returning himself as the sign,

hand<sup>1</sup> of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes,<sup>2</sup> saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They an-

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cx. 1. Acts vii. 55. <sup>2</sup> Luke xxi. 10.  
2 Kin. xix. 1-3. Jer. xxxvi. 24.

with great glory, to destroy your city, and to judge the world.

65. *Then the high priest rent his clothes.* The Jews were accustomed to rend their clothes as a token of grief. This was done often as a matter of form, and consisted in tearing a particular part of the garment reserved for this purpose. It was not lawful for the high priest to rend his clothes. Lev. x. 6; xxi. 10. By that was probably intended the robes of his priestly office. The garment which he now rent was probably his ordinary garment, or the garments which he wore as president of the sanhedrim; not those in which he officiated as high priest in the things of religion. This was done on this occasion to denote the great grief of the high priest that so great a sin as blasphemy had been committed in his presence. ¶ *He hath spoken blasphemy.* That is, he has, under oath, arrogated to himself what belongs to God. In claiming to be the Messiah, in asserting that he was the Son of God, and therefore equal in dignity with the Father, and that he would yet sit at his right hand, he has claimed what belongs to no man, and what is therefore an invasion of the divine prerogative. If he had not been the Messiah, the charge would have been true. But the question was whether he had not given evidence that he was the Messiah, and that therefore his claims were just. This point, the only proper point of inquiry, they never examined. They assumed that he was an impostor; and that point being assumed, every thing like a pretension to being the Messiah, was, in their view, proof that he deserved to die.

66. *What think ye?* What is your opinion? What sentence do you pronounce? As president of the sanhedrim he demanded their judgment. ¶ *He is*

swered and said, He is guilty of death.<sup>3</sup>

67 Then<sup>4</sup> did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with<sup>5</sup> the palms of their hands,

68 Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

<sup>3</sup> Lev. xxiv. 16. John xix. 7. <sup>4</sup> Isa. l. 6.  
<sup>5</sup> Or, rods.

*guilty of death.* This was the form which was used when a criminal was condemned to die. The meaning is, he is found guilty of a crime to which the law annexes death. This sentence was used before the Jews became subject to the Romans, when they had the power of inflicting death. After they were subject to the Romans, though the power of inflicting capital punishment was taken away, yet they retained the form, when they expressed their opinion of the guilt of an offender. The law under which they condemned him was that recorded in Lev. xxiv. 10-16, which sentenced him that was guilty of blasphemy to death by stoning. The chief priests, however, were unwilling to excite a popular tumult by stoning him, and they therefore consulted to deliver him to the Romans to be crucified, under the authority of the Roman name, and thus to prevent any excitement among the people.

67. *They spit in his face.* This, among the Jews, as among us, was significant of the highest contempt and insult. Num. xii. 14. Job xxx. 10. Isa. l. 6. ¶ *And buffeted him.* That is, they struck him with their hands closed, or with the fist. ¶ *Others smote him with the palms of their hands.* The word used in the original here means literally to strike with rods. It also means to strike the mouth with the open hand, as if to prevent a person's speaking, or to evince abhorrence of what he had spoken.

68. *Saying, Prophecy unto us, &c.* Mark informs us that before they said this they had blindfolded him. Having prevented his seeing, they ridiculed his pretensions of being the Messiah. If he was the Christ, they supposed he could tell who smote him. As he bore it patiently, and did not answer, they doubt-

69 ¶ Now <sup>1</sup> Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. <sup>2</sup>

70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out

<sup>1</sup> Mark xiv. 66-72. Luke xxii. 55-62. John xviii. 16-18. <sup>2</sup> John i. 46; vii. 41. 52.

less supposed they had discovered another reason to think he was an impostor. The word *prophecy* does not mean only to foretell future events, although that is the proper meaning of the word; but also to declare anything that is unknown, or anything which cannot be known by natural knowledge, or without revelation. Luke adds, "And many other things blasphemously spake they against him." There is something very remarkable in this expression. They had charged him with blasphemy in claiming to be the Son of God. This charge they were not able to prove. But the evangelist fixes the charge of blasphemy on them, because he really was the Son of God, and they denied it.

69. *Now Peter sat without in the palace.* Mark says the first denial took place while Peter was "beneath in the palace." This *palace* was the large hall or court belonging to the residence of the high priest. The part of it where Jesus and the council were was elevated, probably, above the rest, for a tribunal. Peter was beneath, or in the lower part of the hall, with the servants, at the fire. Yet, as Matthew says, he sat without in the palace; i. e., out of the palace where they were trying Jesus, to wit, in the lower part of the hall with the servants; both narratives are therefore consistent. ¶ *And a damsel came unto him.* John says, ch. xviii. 17, that this damsel was one that kept the door. ¶ *Thou wast also with Jesus of Galilee.* Probably she suspected him from his being in company with John. This was in the early part of the trial of Jesus.

70. *But he denied before them all, &c.* He denied that he was a disciple; he denied that he knew Jesus; he denied (Mark) that he understood what was meant, i. e. he did not see any reason why

into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of

this question was asked. All this was palpable falsehood, and Peter must have known that it was such. This is remarkable, because Peter had just before been so confident. It is more remarkable, because the edge of the charge was taken off by the insinuation that John was known to be a disciple: "Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee."

71. *When he was gone out into the porch.* The entrance, or the small apartment between the outer door and the large hall in the centre of the building. See Note, Matt. ix. 2. Peter was embarrassed and confused by the question; and to save his confusion from attracting notice, he went away from the fire into the porch, where he expected to be unobserved. Yet in vain. By the very movement to avoid detection, he came into contact with another who knew him, and repeated the charge. How clearly does it prove that our Lord was omniscient, that all these things were foreseen! ¶ *Another maid saw him.* Mark simply says that a maid saw him. From Luke it would appear that a man spoke to him. Luke xxii. 58. The truth probably is, that both were done. When he first went out, a maid charged him with being a follower of Jesus. He was probably there a considerable time. To this charge he might have been silent, thinking, perhaps, that he was concealed and there was no need of denying Jesus then. Yet it is very likely that the charge would be repeated. A man also might have repeated it; and Peter, irritated, provoked, perhaps thinking that he was in danger, then denied his Master the second time. This denial was in a stronger manner, and with an oath. While in the porch, Mark says, the cock crew; that is, the first crowing, or not far from midnight.

73. *And after a while.* That is, about

2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him <sup>1</sup> to Pontius Pilate the governor

3 ¶ Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xx. 19.

induced to condemn him. The charge which they fixed on was not that on which they had tried him, and on which they had determined he ought to die, ch. xxvi. 66; but that of perverting the nation and of forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar. Luke xxiii. 2. On this accusation, if made out, they supposed Pilate could be induced to condemn Jesus. On a charge of blasphemy they knew he could not, as that was not an offence against the Roman laws, and over which, therefore, Pilate claimed no jurisdiction. ¶ *To put him to death.* To devise some way by which he might be put to death under the authority of the Roman governor.

2. *And when they had bound him.* He was bound when they took him in the garden. John xviii. 12. Probably when he was tried before the sanhedrim, in the palace of Caiaphas, he had been loosed from his bonds, being there surrounded by multitudes, and supposed to be safe. As they were about to lead him to another part of the city now, they again bound him. The binding consisted, probably, in nothing more than tying his hands. ¶ *Pontius Pilate the governor.* The governor appointed by the Romans over Judea. The governor commonly resided at Cæsarea; but he came up to Jerusalem usually at the great feasts, when most of the Jews were assembled to administer justice, and to suppress tumults if any should arise. The title which Pilate received was that of governor, or procurator. The duties of the office were chiefly to collect the revenues due to the Roman emperor, and in certain cases to administer justice. Pilate was appointed governor of Judea by Tiberius, then emperor of Rome. John says, ch. xviii. 28, that they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the hall of judgment; that is, to the part of the pretorium or governor's palace where justice was administered. The Jews did not, however, enter in themselves, lest they should be defiled,

was condemned, repented himself, \* and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent

<sup>2</sup> Job xx. 5, 15-29. <sup>2</sup> Cor. vii. 10.

but that they might eat the passover. In Num. xix. 22, it is said that whosoever touched an unclean thing should be unclean. For this reason they would not enter into the house of a heathen, lest they should contract some defilement that would render them unfit to keep the passover.

3. *Then Judas, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself.* This shows that Judas did not suppose that the affair would have resulted in this calamitous manner. He probably expected that Jesus would have worked a miracle to deliver himself, and not have suffered this condemnation to come upon him. When he saw him taken, bound, tried, and condemned; when he saw that all probability that he would deliver himself was taken away; he was overwhelmed with disappointment, sorrow, and remorse of conscience. The word rendered *repented himself*, it has been observed, does not of necessity denote a change for the better, but any change of views and feelings. Here it evidently means no other change than that produced by the horrors of a guilty conscience, and by deep remorse for crime at its unexpected results. It was not saving repentance. That leads to a holy life. This led to an increase of crime in his own death. True repentance leads the sinner to the Saviour. This led away from the Saviour to the gallows. Judas, if he had been a true penitent, would have come then to Jesus, confessed his crime at his feet, and sought for pardon there. But, overwhelmed with remorse, and the conviction of vast guilt, he was not willing to come into his presence, and added to the crime of a traitor that of self-murder. Assuredly such a man could not be a true penitent.

4. *I have sinned. I have been guilty. I have done wrong.* ¶ *In that I have betrayed the innocent blood.* That is, in betraying an innocent being to death. Blood is put here for life, or for the man.

blood.<sup>1</sup> And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and de-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. xxiv. 4

The meaning is, that he knew and felt that Jesus was innocent. This confession is a remarkable proof that Jesus was innocent. Judas had been with him three years. He had seen him in public and private, he had heard his public teaching and his private views, he had seen him in all circumstances, and if he had done anything evil, or advanced anything against the Roman emperor, Judas was competent to testify it. Had he known any such thing, he would have stated it. He would have appeared to vindicate himself. His testimony, being a disciple of Jesus, would have been to the chief priests far more valuable than that of any other man; and he might not only have escaped the horrors of a troubled conscience and an awful death, but have looked for an ample reward. That he did not make such a charge, that he fully and frankly confessed that Jesus was innocent, and that he gave up the ill-gotten price of treason, is full proof, that, in the belief of Judas, the Saviour was free from crime, and even the suspicion of crime. ¶ *What is that to us?* This form of speaking denoted that they had nothing to do with his remorse of conscience, and his belief that Jesus was innocent. They had secured what they wanted, the person of Jesus, and they cared little now for the feelings of the traitor. So all wicked men, who make use of the agency of others for the accomplishment of crime, or the gratification of passion, will care little for the effect on the instrument. They will soon cast him off and despise him; and in thousands of instances the instruments of villainy and the panders to the pleasures of others, are abandoned to remorse, wretchedness, crime, and death.

5. *And he cast down, &c.* This was an evidence of his remorse of conscience for his crime. His ill-gotten gain now did him no good. It would not produce relief to his agonised mind. He attempted, therefore, to obtain relief by throwing back the price of treason. But he attempted it in vain. The consciousness of guilt was fastened to his soul; and Judas

parted, and went and hanged<sup>2</sup> himself.

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not

<sup>2</sup> Psa. lv. 23. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Acts i. 18.

found, as all will find, that to cast away or abandon ill-gotten wealth will not alleviate the guilty conscience. ¶ *In the temple.* It is not quite certain what part of the temple is here meant. Some have thought it was the place where the sanhedrim was accustomed to sit; others, the treasury; others, the part where the priests offered sacrifice. It is probable that Judas cared little, or thought little, to what particular part of the temple he went. In his deep remorse he hurried to the temple, and probably cast the money down in the most convenient place, and fled to some situation where he might take his life. ¶ *And went and hanged himself.* The word used in the original, here, has given rise to much discussion, whether it means that he was suffocated or strangled by his great grief or whether he took his life by suspending himself. It is acknowledged on all hands, however, that the latter is its most usual meaning, and it is certainly the most obvious meaning. Peter says, in giving an account of the death of Jesus, Acts i. 18, that Judas, "falling headlong burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." There has been supposed to be some difficulty in reconciling these two accounts, but there is really no necessary difference. Both accounts are true. Matthew records the mode in which Judas attempted his death by hanging. Peter speaks of the result. Judas probably passed out of the temple in great haste, and perturbation of mind. He sought a place where he might perpetrate this crime. He would not, probably, be very careful about the fitness of the means he used. In his anguish, his haste, his desire to die, he seized upon a rope and suspended himself; and it is not at all remarkable, or indeed unusual, that the rope might prove too weak and break. Falling headlong, that is, on his face, he burst asunder, and in awful horrors died a double death, with double pains and double horrors, the reward of his aggravated guilt.

6. *It is not lawful, &c.* It was forbidden, Deut. xxiii. 18, to take what was

lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.<sup>1</sup>

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxiii. 18. Isa. lxi. 8.

esteemed as an abomination, and to offer it to God. The price of blood, that is, of the life of a man, they justly considered as an improper and unlawful offering. ¶ *The treasury.* The treasury was kept in the court of the women. See Notes, ch. xxi. 12. It was composed of a number of small chests placed in different parts of the courts to receive the voluntary offerings of the people, as well as the half shekel required of every Jew. The original word, here rendered *treasury*, contains the notion of an offering to God. What was given there was considered as an offering made to him. ¶ *The price of blood.* The life is in the blood. The word *blood*, here, means the same as life. The price of blood, means the price by which the life of a man has been purchased. This was an acknowledgment that in their view Jesus was innocent. They had bought him, not condemned him justly. It is remarkable that they were so scrupulous now about so small a matter comparatively as putting this money in the treasury, when they had no remorse about murdering an innocent being, and crucifying him who had given full evidence that he was the Messiah. Men are often very scrupulous in small matters, who stick not at great crimes.

7. And they took counsel, &c. They consulted among themselves about the proper way to dispose of this money. ¶ *And bought with them.* In Acts i. 18, it is said of Judas that "he purchased a field with the reward of his iniquity." By the passage in the Acts is meant no more than that he furnished the means, or was the occasion of purchasing the field. It is not of necessity implied that Judas actually made the contract, and paid down the money to buy a field to bury strangers in, a thing which would be in itself very improbable; but that it was by *his means* that the field was purchased. It is very frequent in the scriptures, as well as in other writings, to represent a

8 Wherefore that field was called, <sup>a</sup> The field of blood, unto this day.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken <sup>a</sup> by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the

<sup>a</sup> Acts i. 18. <sup>a</sup> Zech. xi. 12, 13.

man as doing that which he is only the cause or occasion of another's doing. See ch. xxvii. 59, 60. John xix. 1. Acts ii. 23. ¶ *The potter's field.* Probably this was some field well known by that name, which was used for the purpose of making earthen vessels. The price paid for a field so near Jerusalem may appear to be very small; but it is not impossible that it had been worked till the clay was exhausted, and was neither fit for that business nor for tillage, and was therefore considered as of little value. ¶ *To bury strangers in.* Jews, who came up from other parts of the world to attend the great feasts at Jerusalem. The high priests, who regarded the Gentiles as abominable, would not be inclined to provide a burial place for them.

8. *The field of blood.* The field purchased by the price of blood. The name by which this field was called was *Aeldama*. Acts i. 19. It was just without the walls of Jerusalem, on the south of mount Zion. It is now used as a burying-place by the Armenian Christians in Jerusalem, who have a magnificent convent on mount Zion. ¶ *To this day.* That is, to the day when Matthew wrote this gospel, about thirty years after the field was purchased.

9. *Spoken by Jeremy the prophet.* The words quoted here are not to be found in the prophecy of Jeremiah. Words similar to these are recorded in Zech. xi. 12, 13, and from that place this quotation has been doubtless made. Much difficulty has been experienced in explaining the quotation. Anciently, according to the Jewish writers, Jeremiah was reckoned the first of the prophets, and was placed first in the Book of the Prophets: then Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve minor prophets. Some have thought that Matthew, quoting this place, quoted the Book of the Prophets under the name of that which had the first place in the book, i.e., Jeremiah; and though the words

## CHAPTER XXVII. *The judgment hall.*

as of silver, <sup>1</sup> the price  
as was valued, <sup>2</sup> whom  
a children of Israel did

*Or, whom they bought of Israel.*

Zechariah, yet they are quoted the words of the Book of the first of which was Jeremiah. thought that there was a mis-  
sancient transcribers, writing  
zechariah instead of Zechariah;  
sryed that this might be done  
se of only a single letter. It  
s custom to abridge words in  
s. Thus, instead of writing  
Jeremiah in full, it would be  
israel, Iriou. So Zechariah  
ritten Zriou. By the mere  
into I, therefore, the mistake  
be made. Probably this is  
explanation. Others have  
ad the words were spoken by  
nd that Zechariah recorded  
hat Matthew quoted them as  
be words of Jeremiah. The  
t quoted literally; and by its  
d is meant, probably, that the  
d by Zechariah on a similar  
ld express also this event.  
age appropriate to this occa-  
price of him that was valued.  
price of him on whom a value  
e word rendered *valued*, here,  
often in our language, mean  
ut to estimate; not to love,  
regard, but to fix a price on,  
be value of. This they conse-  
thirty pieces of silver, the  
ce of a slave. ¶ *They of the  
Israel did value.* Some of  
e leaders or priests, acting in  
f the nation. ¶ *Did value.*  
e, or fix a price on.  
gave them. In Zechariah it  
hem. Here it is represented  
m by the priests. The mean-  
owever, different. It is, that  
as given for the potter's field.  
and appointed me. That is,  
me. The meaning of the  
hariah is this: He was directed  
e Jews as a prophet, a pastor  
e. They treated him, as they  
o them, with great contempt.  
sm to give him his price, i. e.

10 And gave them for the pot-  
ter's field, as the Lord appointed  
me.

11 And Jesus stood before the  
governor: and the governor asked

the price which they thought he and his  
pastoral labours were worth, or to show  
their estimate of his office. If they  
thought it of value, they were to pay  
him accordingly; if not, they were to  
forebear, that is, to give nothing. To  
show their great contempt of him and his  
office, and of God who had sent him,  
they gave him thirty pieces of silver, the  
price of a slave. This God commanded,  
or appointed him to give to the potter, or  
to throw into the pottery, or to throw  
away. So in the time of Jesus the same  
thing was substantially repeated. Jesus  
came as the Messiah. They hated and  
rejected him. To show their contempt  
of him and his cause, they valued him  
at the price of a slave. This was thrown  
down in the temple, taken by the priests,  
and appropriated to the purchase of a  
field owned by a potter, worn out, and  
of little or no value; all showing at how  
low a price, through the whole transaction,  
the Son of God was estimated. Though  
the words quoted here are not precisely  
like those in Zechariah, yet the sense and  
general structure are the same.

11. *And Jesus stood before the gover-  
nor.* Many things are omitted by Mat-  
thew in the account of this trial, which  
are recorded by the other evangelists. A  
much more full account is found in John  
xviii. 28—40. ¶ *And the governor asked  
him, &c.* This question was asked on  
account of the charge which the Jews  
brought against Jesus, of perverting the  
nation, and forbidding to give tribute to  
Cæsar. Luke xxiii. 2. It was on this  
charge that, after consultation, they had  
agreed to arraign him before Pilate. They  
had condemned him for blasphemy; but  
they well knew that Pilate would alto-  
gether disregard an accusation of that  
kind. They therefore attempted to substi-  
tute a totally different accusation from  
that on which they had professed to find  
him guilty; to excite the jealousy of the  
Roman governor, and to procure his  
death on a false charge of treason against  
the Roman emperor. ¶ *Thou sayest.*



lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.<sup>1</sup>

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxiii. 18. Isa. lxi. 8.

esteemed as an abomination, and to offer it to God. The price of blood, that is, of the life of a man, they justly considered as an improper and unlawful offering. ¶ *The treasury.* The treasury was kept in the court of the women. See Notes, ch. xxi. 12. It was composed of a number of small chests placed in different parts of the courts to receive the voluntary offerings of the people, as well as the half shekel required of every Jew. The original word, here rendered *treasury*, contains the notion of an offering to God. What was given there was considered as an offering made to him. ¶ *The price of blood.* The life is in the blood. The word *blood*, here, means the same as life. The price of blood, means the price by which the life of a man has been purchased. This was an acknowledgment that in their view Jesus was innocent. They had bought him, not condemned him justly. It is remarkable that they were so scrupulous now about so small a matter comparatively as putting this money in the treasury, when they had no remorse about murdering an innocent being, and crucifying him who had given full evidence that he was the Messiah. Men are often very scrupulous in small matters, who stick not at great crimes.

7. And they took counsel, &c. They consulted among themselves about the proper way to dispose of this money. ¶ *And bought with them.* In Acts i. 18, it is said of Judas that "he purchased a field with the reward of his iniquity." By the passage in the Acts is meant no more than that he furnished the means, or was the occasion of purchasing the field. It is not of necessity implied that Judas actually made the contract, and paid down the money to buy a field to bury strangers in, a thing which would be in itself very improbable; but that it was by *his means* that the field was purchased. It is very frequent in the scriptures, as well as in other writings, to represent a

8 Wherefore that field was called, <sup>2</sup> The field of blood, unto this day.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken <sup>3</sup> by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the

<sup>2</sup> Acts i. 19. <sup>3</sup> Zech. xi. 12, 13.

man as doing that which he is only the cause or occasion of another's doing. See ch. xxvii. 59, 60. John xix. 1. Acts ii. 23. ¶ *The potter's field.* Probably this was some field well known by that name, which was used for the purpose of making earthen vessels. The price paid for a field so near Jerusalem may appear to be very small; but it is not improbable that it had been worked till the clay was exhausted, and was neither fit for that business nor for tillage, and was therefore considered as of little value. ¶ *To bury strangers in.* Jews, who came up from other parts of the world to attend the great feasts at Jerusalem. The high priests, who regarded the Gentiles as abominable, would not be inclined to provide a burial place for them.

8. *The field of blood.* The field purchased by the price of blood. The name by which this field was called was *Aceldama*. Acts i. 19. It was just without the walls of Jerusalem, on the south of mount Zion. It is now used as a burying-place by the Armenian Christians in Jerusalem, who have a magnificent convent on mount Zion. ¶ *To this day.* That is, to the day when Matthew wrote this gospel, about thirty years after the field was purchased.

9. *Spoken by Jeremy the prophet.* The words quoted here are not to be found in the prophecy of Jeremiah. Words similar to these are recorded in Zech. xi. 12, 13, and from that place this quotation has been doubtless made. Much difficulty has been experienced in explaining this quotation. Anciently, according to the Jewish writers, Jeremiah was reckoned the first of the prophets, and was placed first in the Book of the Prophets: then, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve minor prophets. Some have thought that Matthew, quoting this place, quoted the Book of the Prophets under the name of that which had the first place in the book, i. e., Jeremiah; and though the words

thirty pieces of silver, <sup>1</sup> the price of him that was valued, <sup>2</sup> whom they of the children of Israel did value ;

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxi. 32. <sup>2</sup> Or, whom they bought of the children of Israel.

are those of Zechariah, yet they are quoted correctly as the words of the Book of the Prophets, the first of which was Jeremiah. Others have thought that there was a mistake made by ancient transcribers, writing the name Jeremiah instead of Zechariah; and it is observed that this might be done by the change of only a single letter. It was often the custom to abridge words in writing them. Thus, instead of writing the name of Jeremiah in full, it would be written in Greek, Iriou. So Zechariah would be written Zriou. By the mere change of Z into I, therefore, the mistake might easily be made. Probably this is the correct explanation. Others have supposed that the words were spoken by Jeremiah, and that Zechariah recorded them, and that Matthew quoted them as they were, the words of Jeremiah. The passage is not quoted literally; and by its being fulfilled is meant, probably, that the language used by Zechariah on a similar occasion would express also this event. It was language appropriate to this occasion. ¶ *The price of him that was valued.* That is, the price of him on whom a value was set. The word rendered *valued*, here, does not, as often in our language, mean to esteem, but to estimate; not to love, approve, or regard, but to fix a price on, to estimate the value of. This they considered to be thirty pieces of silver, the common price of a slave. ¶ *They of the children of Israel did value.* Some of the Jews, the leaders or priests, acting in the name of the nation. ¶ *Did value.* Did estimate, or fix a price on.

10. *And gave them.* In Zechariah it is, I gave them. Here it is represented as being given by the priests. The meaning is not, however, different. It is, that this price was given for the potter's field. ¶ *As the Lord appointed me.* That is, commanded me. The meaning of the place in Zechariah is this: He was directed to go to the Jews as a prophet, a pastor of the people. They treated him, as they had done others, with great contempt. He asks them to give him his price, i. e.

10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked

the price which they thought he and his pastoral labours were worth, or to show their estimate of his office. If they thought it of value, they were to pay him accordingly; if not, they were to forbear, that is, to give nothing. To show their great contempt of him and his office, and of God who had sent him, they gave him thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave. This God commanded, or appointed him to give to the potter, or to throw into the pottery, or to throw away. So in the time of Jesus the same thing was substantially repeated. Jesus came as the Messiah. They hated and rejected him. To show their contempt of him and his cause, they valued him at the price of a slave. This was thrown down in the temple, taken by the priests, and appropriated to the purchase of a field owned by a potter, worn out, and of little or no value; all showing at how low a price, through the whole transaction, the Son of God was estimated. Though the words quoted here are not precisely like those in Zechariah, yet the sense and general structure are the same.

11. *And Jesus stood before the governor.* Many things are omitted by Matthew in the account of this trial, which are recorded by the other evangelists. A much more full account is found in John xviii. 28—40. ¶ *And the governor asked him, &c.* This question was asked on account of the charge which the Jews brought against Jesus, of perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar. Luke xxiii. 2. It was on this charge that, after consultation, they had agreed to arraign him before Pilate. They had condemned him for blasphemy; but they well knew that Pilate would altogether disregard an accusation of that kind. They therefore attempted to substitute a totally different accusation from that on which they had professed to find him guilty; to excite the jealousy of the Roman governor, and to procure his death on a false charge of treason against the Roman emperor. ¶ *Thou sayest.*

him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.<sup>1</sup>

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered<sup>2</sup> nothing.

13 Then saith Pilate unto him,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 13. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xxvi. 63. Psa. xxxviii. 13, 14. Isa. liii. 7, 8.

That is, thou sayest right, or thou sayest the truth. We may wonder why the Jews, if they heard this confession, did not press it upon the attention of Pilate as a full confession of his guilt. It was what they had accused him of. But it might be doubtful whether, in the confusion, they heard the confession; or if they did, Jesus took away all occasion of triumph by explaining to Pilate the nature of his kingdom. John xviii. 36. Though he acknowledged that he was a king, yet he stated fully that his kingdom was not of this world, and that therefore it could not be alleged against him as treason against the Roman emperor. This was done in the palace, apart from the Jews, and fully satisfied Pilate of his innocence. John xviii. 23.

12. *When he was accused, &c.* To wit, of perverting the nation, and of forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar. Luke xxiii. 2, 5. Probably this was done in a tumultuous manner, and in every variety of form. ¶ *He answered nothing.* He was conscious of his innocence. He knew that they could not prove these charges. They offered no testimony to prove them; and, in conscious innocence, he was silent.

13. *They witness against thee.* This means, rather, that they accused him. They were not witnesses, but accusers. These accusations were repeated and pressed. They charged him with exciting the people, teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee to Jerusalem, and exciting them to sedition. Luke xxiii. 5.

14. *To never a word.* That is, not at all. He said nothing. This is a way of speaking, denoting that it was remarkable. It is an emphatic way of saying that he answered nothing. There was no need of his replying. He was innocent, and they offered no proof of guilt. Besides, his

appearance was full evidence in his favour. He was poor, unarmed, without powerful friends, and alone. His life had been public, and his sentiments were well known, and the charge had on the face of it the aspect of absurdity. It deserved therefore no answer. ¶ *Marvelled greatly.* Wondered exceedingly, or was much surprised. He was probably more surprised that he bore this so meekly, and did not return railing for railing, than that he did not set up a defence. The latter was unnecessary. The former was unusual. The governor was not accustomed to see it, and was therefore greatly amazed.

14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now<sup>3</sup> at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto

<sup>3</sup> Mark xv. 6—13. Luke xxiii. 17—25. John xviii. 39, 40.

appearance was full evidence in his favour. He was poor, unarmed, without powerful friends, and alone. His life had been public, and his sentiments were well known, and the charge had on the face of it the aspect of absurdity. It deserved therefore no answer. ¶ *Marvelled greatly.* Wondered exceedingly, or was much surprised. He was probably more surprised that he bore this so meekly, and did not return railing for railing, than that he did not set up a defence. The latter was unnecessary. The former was unusual. The governor was not accustomed to see it, and was therefore greatly amazed.

It was at this time that Pilate, having heard them speak of Galilee, Luke xxiii. 5, asked if he was a Galilean. Having ascertained that he was, and probably desirous of freeing himself from any further trouble in the affair, under pretence that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Jesus to Herod, who was then at Jerusalem, attending the feast of the passover. Luke xxiii. 6—12. Herod, having examined him, and finding no cause of death in him, sent him back to Pilate. Pleased with the respect which had been shown him, Herod laid aside his enmity against Pilate, and they became friends. The cause of their friendship does not appear to be at all that they were united in opposing the claims of Jesus to be the Messiah, but the respect which Pilate had shown in sending Jesus to him.

15—23. See also the parallel places in Mark xv. 6—14; Luke xxiii. 17—23; John xviii. 39, 40.

15. *At that feast.* The feast of the passover. ¶ *The governor was wont to release, &c.* Was accustomed to release. From what this custom arose, or by whom it was introduced, is not known. It was probably adopted to secure popularity among the Jews, and to render the go-

the people a prisoner, whom they could.

16 And they had then a notable<sup>1</sup> prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto<sup>2</sup> Mark xv. 7. Luke xxiii. 18. John xviii. 40. vs iii. 14.

ment of the Romans less odious. A little indulgence granted to the Jews during the heavy oppression of the Romans, would serve to conciliate their favour, and to keep the nation from secession. It might happen often that when criminals were arraigned before the Romans, on a charge of sedition, some peculiar favourite of the people, or some leader, might be among the number. It is evident that if they had the privilege of covering such a person, it would serve much to allay their feelings, and make tolerable the yoke under which they groaned.

16. *A notable prisoner.* The word *notable* means one that is distinguished in any way, either for great virtues or great crimes. In this place it evidently means the latter. He was perhaps a leader of a band who had been guilty of sedition, and had committed murder in an insurrection. Luke xxiii. 19.

17. *Whom will ye that I release, &c.* Pilate was satisfied of the innocence of Jesus. Luke xxiii. 13—16. He was, therefore, desirous of releasing him. He wanted to release one to the people. He knew that Jesus, though condemned by the chief priests, was yet popular among the people. He therefore attended in this manner to rescue him from the hands of the priests, and expected that the people would prefer him, an odious and infamous robber and murderer. Had the people been left to themselves, they would probably have preferred Jesus. *¶ Jesus which is called Barabbas.* That is, Jesus who claims to be the Messiah.

Pilate probably did not believe Jesus much for it. He used the name which Jesus had acquired among the people. Perhaps, also, he thought Jesus would be more likely to ask him to be released, if he was presented to him as the Messiah; Mark adds, ch. xv. 13. He asked them whether they would that he should release the king of the Jews? *It is probable that he*

asked the question in both ways. Perhaps it was several times repeated, and Matthew has recorded one way in which it was asked, and Mark another. He asked them whether they would demand him who "was called the Christ," expecting that they would be moved by the claims of the Messiah, claims which when he entered Jerusalem in triumph, and in the temple, they had acknowledged. He asked them whether they would have "the king of the Jews," probably to ridicule the priests who had delivered him on that charge. He did it to show the people how absurd the accusation was.

18 For he knew that for envy<sup>3</sup> they had delivered him.

19 ¶ When he was set down on

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxvii. 4. Ecc. iv. 4.

There he stood, apparently, a poor, inoffensive, unarmed, and despised man. Herod set him at nought and scourged him, and sent him back. The charge, therefore, of the priests, that he was a king opposed to the Roman emperor, was supremely ridiculous; and Pilate expecting the people would see it to be so, hoped also that they would ask him to be released.

18. *For he knew that for envy, &c.* This was envy at his popularity. He drew away the people from them. This Pilate understood probably from his knowledge of the pride and ambition of the rulers, and from the fact that no danger could arise from a person that appeared like Jesus. If Pilate knew this, he was bound to release him himself. As a governor and judge, he was bound to protect the innocent, and should in spite of all the opposition of the Jews, at once have set Jesus at liberty. But the Scriptures could not then have been fulfilled. It was necessary, in order that an atonement should be made, that Jesus should be condemned to die. At the same time, it shows the wisdom of the overruling providence of God, that he was condemned by a man who was satisfied of his innocence, and who proclaimed before his accusers his full belief that there was no fault in him.

19. *Have thou nothing to do, &c.* That is, do not condemn him. Perhaps

the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that <sup>1</sup> just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask <sup>2</sup> Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 11.    Zech. ix. 9.    Luke xxiii. 47.  
<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 22.    1 John ii. 1.    <sup>3</sup> Acts iii. 14.

she was afraid that the vengeance of Heaven would follow her husband and family, if he condemned the innocent. ¶ *That just man.* The word *just* here has the sense of innocent, or not guilty. She might have been satisfied of his innocence from other sources, as well as from the dream. It is possible that the woman might have been a worshipper of the true God, and that she might therefore have desired that the Messiah should be released. ¶ *I have suffered many things, &c.* Dreams were occasionally considered as indications of the divine will, and among the Romans and Greeks, as well as Jews, great reliance was placed on them. Her mind, probably agitated with the subject, satisfied of the innocence of Jesus, and knowing that the Jews would make every effort to secure his condemnation, was also excited during her sleep, perhaps with a frightful prospect of the judgments that would descend on the family of Pilate if Jesus was condemned. She therefore sent to him to secure if possible his release.

20. *Persuaded the multitude.* The release of a prisoner was to be to the people, not to the rulers. The rulers, therefore, in order to secure the condemnation of Jesus, urged on the people to demand Barabbas. The people were greatly under the influence of the priests. Galileans, among the citizens of Jerusalem, were held in contempt. The priests turned the pretensions of Jesus into ridicule. Hence in a popular tumult, among a flexible

shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? <sup>3</sup> They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let <sup>4</sup> him be crucified.

24 ¶ When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed <sup>5</sup> his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. liii. 2, 3.    <sup>4</sup> Ch. xxi. 38, 39.    <sup>5</sup> Deut. xxi. 6.

and changing multitude, they easily excited them who but a little before had cried Hosannah, to cry crucify him.

21. *Whether of the twain?* Which of the two, Jesus or Barabbas.

23. *And the governor said, Why?* Luke informs us that Pilate put this question to them three times, so anxious was he to release him. He affirmed that he had found no cause of death in him. He said therefore, that he would chastise him, and let him go. He expected probably by causing him to be publicly whipped, to excite their compassion, to satisfy them, and thus to evade the demands of the priests, and to set him at liberty with the consent of the people. So weak and irresolute was this Roman governor! Satisfied of the innocence of Jesus, he should at once have preferred justice to popularity, and acted as became a magistrate in acquitting the innocent. ¶ *Let him be crucified.* See Note, ver. 39. Luke says they were instant with loud voices demanding this. They urged it. They demanded it with a popular clamour.

24. *He took water, &c.* The Jews were accustomed to wash their hands when they wished to show that they were innocent of a crime committed by others. See Deut. xxi. 6; Psa. xvi. 6. They often used signs to represent their meaning. Pilate, in doing this, meant to denote that they were guilty as to Jesus, but that he was innocent. But the mere washing of his hands, did not free him from guilt.

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His <sup>1</sup> blood be on us, and on our children.

26 ¶ Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxi. 44. Dent. xix. 10. Josh. ii. 19. Acts v. 28.

He was bound as a magistrate to free an innocent man; and whatever might be the clamour of the Jews, he was guilty at the bar of God for suffering the holy Saviour to be led to execution, to gratify the malice of enraged priests, and the clamours of a tumultuous populace. ¶ See ye to it. That is, take it upon yourselves. Ye are responsible for it if ye put him to death.

25. *His blood be on us, &c.* That is, let the guilt of putting him to death, if there be any, be on us and our children. We will be answerable for it, and will consent to bear the punishment for it. It is remarked by writers, that among the Athenians, if any one accused another of a capital crime he devoted himself and children to the same punishment, if the accused was afterwards found innocent. So in all countries the conduct of the parent involves also the children in the consequences of his conduct. The Jews had no right to call down this vengeance on their children, but in the righteous judgment of God it has come upon them. In less than forty years their city and temple were overthrown and destroyed. More than a million of people perished in the siege. Thousands died by famine, thousands by disease, thousands by the sword; and their blood ran down the streets like water, so that, Josephus says, it extinguished flames that were burning in the city. Thousands were crucified, suffering the same punishment that they had inflicted on the Messiah. So great was the number of those who were crucified, that, Josephus says, they were obliged to cease from it, "room being wanted for the crosses, and crosses for the men." To this day, also, the curse has remained. They have been a nation scattered and peeled, persecuted almost everywhere, and a hissing and a by-word among men. No single nation probably has suffered so much; and yet they have been preserved. All classes of men, all the governments of the earth, have conspired to overwhelm

scourged <sup>2</sup> Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the <sup>3</sup> common hall, and gathered un-

<sup>2</sup> Isa. liii. 5. Luke xviii. 33. <sup>3</sup> Or, governor's house.

them with calamity, and yet they still live as monuments of the justice of God, and as proofs, going down from age to age, that the Christian religion is true; a standing demonstration of the crime of their fathers in putting the Messiah to death, and in calling down vengeance on their heads.

26. *And when he had scourged Jesus.* See Note, ch. x. 17. Among the Romans it was customary to scourge or whip a slave before he was crucified. This was done to inflict a greater suffering than crucifixion alone would be, and to add to the horrors of the punishment. Our Lord, being about to be put to death after the manner of a slave, was also treated as a slave, as one of the lowest and most despised of mankind. ¶ *He delivered him, &c.* Not merely he gave him up to them to crucify him, as if they only were answerable, but he gave him up as a judge when he ought to have saved his life, and might have done it. Crucifixion was a Roman punishment; Roman soldiers were employed to inflict it; Pilate pronounced the sentence from the tribunal, and Pilate affixed the title to the cross. Pilate, therefore, as well as the Jews, was answerable to God for the death of the Saviour of the world.

27—31. See also Mark xv. 15—20. John xix. 1—3.

27. *Into the common hall.* The original word here means rather the governor's palace, or dwelling. The trial of Jesus had taken place out of the palace. The Jews would not enter in, and it is probable that courts were held often in a larger and more public place, than would be a room in his dwelling. Jesus, being condemned, was led by the soldiers away from the Jews within the palace, and subjected to their profane mockery and sport. ¶ *The whole band.* The band or cohort was a tenth part of a Roman legion, and consisted of from four hundred to six hundred men, according to the size of the legion.

to him the whole band of soldiers.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

29 ¶ And when they had<sup>1</sup> platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxv. 15, 16. Jer. xx. 7. Heb. xii. 2, 3.

28. *And they stripped him.* That is, they either took off all his upper garments or removed all his clothing, probably the former. ¶ *A scarlet robe.* Mark says they clothed him in purple. The scarlet colour was obtained from a species of fruit; purple from shell-fish. The ancients gave the name purple to any colour that had a mixture of red in it, and consequently these different colours might be sometimes called by the same name. The robe here used was the kind worn by Roman generals, and other distinguished officers of the Roman army, and also by the Roman governors. It was made so as to be placed on the shoulders, and was bound around the body so as to leave the right arm at liberty. As we cannot suppose that Pilate would array him in a new and splendid robe, we must suppose that this was one which had been worn and cast off as useless, and was now used to array the Son of God as an object of ridicule and scorn.

29. *Had platted.* The word *platted* here means woven together, or having made a wreath of a thorn bush. ¶ *A crown.* Or perhaps rather a wreath. A crown was worn by kings, commonly made of gold and precious stones. To ridicule the pretensions of Jesus, that he was a king, they probably plucked up a thorn bush growing near, made it into something resembling in shape a royal crown so as to correspond with the old purple, and to complete the mockery. ¶ *Of thorns.* What is the precise species of shrub denoted here is not certainly known. It was, however, doubtless, one of that species that has sharp points of very hard wood. They could, therefore, be easily pressed into the skin, and cause considerable pain. Probably they seized upon the first thing in their way that could be made into a crown, and this happened to be a thorn, thus increasing the sufferings of the meek Redeemer. ¶ *And a reed in his right hand.* A reed is a straight,

slender herb, growing in marshy places, and abundant on the banks of the Jordan. It was often used for the purpose of making staves for walking; and it is not improbable that this was such a staff in the possession of some person present. The word is several times thus used. See 2 Kin. xviii. 21. Isa. xxxvi. 6. Ezek. xxix. 6. Kings commonly carried a sceptre, made of ivory or gold, as a sign of their office or rank. Est. iv. 11; viii. 4. This reed or staff they put in his hand in imitation of a sceptre, to deride also his pretensions of being a king. ¶ *And they bowed the knee.* This was done in mockery. It was an act of pretended homage. It was to ridicule his saying that he was a king. The common mode of showing respect or homage for kings, was by kneeling or prostration. It shows amazing forbearance on the part of Jesus, that he thus consented to be ridiculed, and set at nought. No mere human being would have borne it. None but He who loved us unto death, and who saw the grand results that would come from this scene of sufferings, could have endured such cruel mockery. ¶ *Hail, King of the Jews.* The term, *Hail*, was a common mode of salutation to a king, or even to a friend. It implies, commonly, the highest respect for office, as well as the person, and is an invocation of blessings on the person. Here it was used to carry on what they thought to be the farce of his being a king; to ridicule in every possible way the pretensions of a poor, unattended, unarmed man of Nazareth, as if he had been a weak impostor, or had been deranged.

30 And they spit<sup>2</sup> upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxix. 10, 20. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xlix. 7; 1. 6. Ill. 3, 7.

30. *And they spit upon him.* This was a token of the deepest contempt and insult. See Note, ch. xxvi. 67. ¶ *And took the reed.* The cane, probably so large as to inflict a heavy blow. ¶ *And smote him on the head.* Not merely to injure him by the force of the blow, but

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led <sup>1</sup> him away to crucify him.

<sup>1</sup> Num. xv. 25. 1 Kin. xxi. 10, 13. Acts vii. 52. Heb. xiii. 12.

to press the thorns into his head, and thus to add cruelty to insult.

31, 32. *As they came out.* That is, out of the governor's palace, where he had been treated with such cruelty and contempt, or out of the gates of the city to crucify him. ¶ *A man of Cyrene.* Cyrene was a city of Libya, in Africa, lying west of Egypt. There were many Jews there, and they were in the habit, like others, of going frequently to Jerusalem. ¶ *Him they compelled to bear his cross.* John says, ch. xix. 17, that Jesus went forth bearing his cross. Luke says, ch. xxiii. 26, that they laid the cross on Simon, that he might bear it after Jesus. There is no contradiction in these accounts. It was a part of the usual punishment of those who were crucified, that they should bear their own cross to the place of execution. It was accordingly laid first on Jesus, and he went forth, as John says, hearing it. Weak, however, and exhausted by suffering and watchfulness, he probably sank under the heavy burden, and they laid hold of Simon that he might bear one end of the cross, as Luke says, after Jesus. The cross was composed of two pieces of wood, one of which was placed upright in the earth, and the other crossed it, after the form of the figure †. The upright part was commonly so high that the feet of the person crucified were two or three feet from the ground. On the middle of that upright part there was a projection, or seat, on which the person crucified sat, or, as it were, rode. This was necessary, as the hands alone were not strong enough to bear the weight of the body; as the body was left exposed often many days, and not unfrequently suffered to remain till the flesh had been devoured by vultures, or putrefied in the sun. The feet were fastened to this upright piece, either by nailing them with large spikes driven through the tender part, or by being lashed by cords. To

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

the cross piece at the top, the hands, being extended, were also fastened, either by spikes, or by cords, or perhaps in some cases by both. The hands and feet of our Saviour, were both fastened by spikes. Crosses were also sometimes made in the form of the letter X, the limbs of the person crucified being extended to the four parts, and he suffered to die a lingering death, in this cruel manner. The cross used in the crucifixion of Christ, appears to have been the former. The mention of the cross often occurs in the New Testament. It was the instrument on which the Saviour made atonement for the sins of the world. The whole of the Christian's hope of heaven, and all his peace and consolation in trial and in death, depend on the sacrifice made there for sin, and on just views and feelings in regard to the fact and the design of the Redeemer's death.

33. *Golgotha.* This is the Hebrew word, signifying the place of a skull. This is the word which in Luke is called Calvary. In the original there also, it is a skull. The word *Calvary* is a Latin word meaning skull, or place of skulls. It is not known certainly why this name was given to this place. Some have supposed that it was because the mount resembled in shape a human skull. The most probable opinion, however, is that it was a place of execution; that malefactors were beheaded there, or otherwise put to death, and that their bones remained unburied or unburned. Mount Calvary was a small eminence usually supposed to have been on the north-west of Jerusalem, without the walls of the city, but at a short distance. Jesus was put to death out of the city, because capital punishments were not allowed within the walls. See Num. xv. 35. 1 Kin. xxi. 13. This was a law among the Romans, as well as the Jews. He also died there, because the bodies of the beasts slain in sacrifice as typical of him,



34 ¶ They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled <sup>1</sup> with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 48. Psa. lxi. 21. John xix. 28—30.

were burned without the camp. He also, as the antitype, suffered without the gate. Heb. xiii. 11, 12. The place which is shown as Calvary now is within the city, and must also have been within the ancient walls, and there is no reason to suppose that it is the place where the Saviour was put to death.

34. *They gave him vinegar, &c.* Mark says that "they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh." The two evangelists mean the same thing. Vinegar was made of light wine rendered acid, and was the common drink of the Roman soldiers, and this might be called either vinegar or wine, in common language. Myrrh is a bitter substance, produced in Arabia, but is used often to denote any thing bitter. The meaning of the name is bitterness. See Note, ch. ii. 11. Gall is properly a bitter secretion from the liver, but the word is also used to denote any thing exceedingly bitter, as wormwood, &c. The drink, therefore, was vinegar or wine, rendered bitter by the infusion of wormwood, or some other very bitter substance. The effect of this, it is said, was to stupify the senses. It was often given to those crucified, to render them insensible to the pains of death. Our Lord knowing this, when he had tasted it, refused to drink. He was unwilling to blunt the pains of dying. The cup which his Father gave him, he rather chose to drink. He came to suffer. His sorrows were necessary for the work of the atonement; and he gave himself up to the unmitigated sufferings of the cross. This was presented to him in the early part of his sufferings, or when he was about to be suspended on the cross. Afterward, when he was on the cross, and just before his death, vinegar was offered to him without the myrrh; the vinegar which the soldiers usually drank, and of this he received. See ver. 48, and John xix. 28—30. Where Matthew and Mark say that he would not drink, *they refer to a different thing, and a different time, from John, and there is no contradiction.*

35 And <sup>2</sup> they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xxii. 16. Mark xv. 24—28. Luke xxiii. 34—46. John xix. 24.

35. *And they crucified him.* To *crucify*, means to put to death on a cross. The manner of the crucifixion was as follows: After the criminal had carried the cross, attended with every possible jibe and insult, to the place of execution, a hole was dug in the earth to receive the foot, or lower end of the cross. The cross was laid on the ground; the person condemned to suffer was stripped, and was extended on it, and the soldiers fastened the hands and feet either by nails or thongs. After they had fixed the nails deeply in the wood, they elevated the cross with the agonizing sufferer on it; and in order to fix it more firmly in the earth, they let it fall violently into the hole which they had dug to receive it. This sudden fall must have given to the person that was nailed to it a most violent and convulsive shock, and greatly increased his sufferings. The crucified person was then suffered to hang, commonly, till pain, exhaustion, thirst, and hunger, ended his life. Sometimes the sufferings continued for days; and after death the body was often suffered to remain, a loathsome object, putrefying in the sun, or devoured by birds.

This punishment was deemed the most disgraceful and ignominious that was practised among the Romans. It was the way in which slaves, robbers, and the most notorious and abandoned wretches, were commonly put to death. It was this, among other things, that exposed those who preached the gospel to so much shame and contempt among the Greeks and Romans. They despised every thing that was connected with the death of one who had died as a slave and an outlaw.

As it was the most ignominious punishment known, so it was the most painful. The following circumstances make it a death of peculiar pain: 1. The position of the arms and the body was unnatural, the arms being extended back and almost immoveable. The least motion gave violent pain in the hands and feet, and in the back, which was lacerated with

spoken<sup>1</sup> by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 And sitting down they watched him there ;

37 And set up over his head

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxii. 18.

stripes. 2. The nails being driven through the parts of the hands and feet which abound with nerves and tendons, created the most exquisite anguish. 3. The exposure of so many wounds to the air brought on a violent inflammation, which greatly increased the poignancy of the suffering. 4. The free circulation of the blood was prevented. More blood was carried out in the arteries than could be returned by the veins. The consequence was, that there was a great increase in the veins of the head, producing an intense pressure and violent pain. The same was true of other parts of the body. This intense pressure in the blood-vessels was the source of inexpressible misery. 5. The pain gradually increased. There was no relaxation and no rest. There was no prospect but death. The sufferer was commonly able to endure it till the third, and sometimes even to the seventh day. The intense sufferings of the Saviour, however, were sooner terminated. This was caused, perhaps, in some measure, by his previous fatigue and exhaustion, but still more by the intense sufferings of his soul, in bearing our griefs, and carrying our sorrows ; in making an atonement for the sins of the world. See Note on Mark xv. 44. ¶ *And parted his garments.* It was customary to crucify a person naked. The clothes of the sufferer belonged to those who were executioners. John says, ch. xix. 23, that they divided his garments into four parts, to each soldier a part ; but for his coat they cast lots. See Note on the place. When Matthew says, therefore, that they parted his garments, casting lots, it is to be understood that they divided one part of them, and for the other part of them they cast lots. ¶ *That it might be fulfilled, &c.* The words here quoted are found in Psalm xxii. 18. The whole psalm is usually referred to Christ, and is a most striking description of his sufferings and death.

his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

38 Then were there two thieves<sup>2</sup> crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. liii. 12.

36. *They watched him there.* That is, the four soldiers who had crucified him. They watched him lest his friends should come and release him.

37. *And set up over his head.* John says, ch. xix. 19, that Pilate wrote the title, and put it upon the cross. Probably Pilate wrote it, or caused it to be written, and directed the soldiers to set it up. A man is often said to do what he directs others to do. It was customary to set up over the heads of persons crucified their names, and the crimes for which they suffered. The accusation on which Jesus had been condemned by Pilate, was his claiming to be the king of the Jews. ¶ *This is Jesus the king of the Jews.* The evangelists differ in the account of this title. Mark says, ch. xv. 26, it was "the king of the Jews." Luke says, ch. xxiii. 38, "this is the king of the Jews." John, ch. xix. 19, "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews." But the difficulty may be easily removed. John says, that the title was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. It is not at all improbable that the inscription varied in these languages. One evangelist may have translated it from the Hebrew ; another from the Greek ; a third from the Latin ; and a fourth may have translated one of the inscriptions a little differently from the others. Besides, the evangelists all agree in the main point of the inscription, viz. that he assumed to be the king of the Jews.

38. *Two thieves crucified, &c.* Rather, two robbers. Pilate did not reside in Jerusalem. When he came there on the great feasts, or at other times, it was, in part, to hold courts for the trial of criminals. These robbers had been probably condemned at that time ; and to show greater contempt for Jesus, he was crucified between men of that abandoned character, and on a cross that should have been occupied by their companion and leader, Barabbas.

39 ¶ And they that passed by reviled him, wagging <sup>1</sup> their heads,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking <sup>2</sup> him, with the scribes and elders, said,

42 He saved others; himself he

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlii. 7; cix. 25. <sup>2</sup> Job xlii. 9. Psa. xxxv. 16. Luke xviii. 32.

39. *Wagging their heads.* In token of derision and insult. See Job xvi. 4. Psa. cix. 25.

40. *Thou that destroyest the temple, &c.* Meaning thou that didst boast that thou couldest do it. This was one of the things that had been falsely charged on him. It was intended for painful sarcasm and derision. If he could destroy the temple, they thought he might easily come down from the cross.

42, 43. *He saved others.* It does not seem probable that they meant to admit that he had actually saved others, but only that he pretended to save them from death by miracles, or that he claimed to be the Messiah, and thus affirmed that he could save them. This is, therefore, cutting irony. ¶ *If he be the King of Israel, &c.* It may seem strange to some that Jesus did not vindicate by a great miracle his claims to be the Messiah, and come down from the cross. But the time had come for him to make atonement. He had given full and sufficient proof that he was the Christ. The people would have been as little satisfied if even he had come down from the cross. They said this for the purpose of insult; and Jesus chose rather to suffer though his character was assailed, than to work a new miracle for their gratification. He had foretold his death, and the time had come; and now, amidst revilings, and jibes, and curses, and the severe sarcasms of an angry and apparently triumphant priesthood, he chose to die for the sins of the world. To this they added insult to God, profanely calling upon him to interpose by miracle, and save the sufferer, if he was his

friend. And all this, when their prophets had foretold this very scene, and when they were fulfilling the predictions of their own scriptures. So wonderful is the way by which God causes his word to be fulfilled.

43 He trusted in God; let <sup>3</sup> him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, <sup>4</sup> I am the Son of God.

44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

45 Now from the sixth hour

<sup>3</sup> Psa. lli. 2; xxii. 8; xlii. 10; lxxi. 11. <sup>4</sup> John v. 17, 18; x. 30, 36.

friend. And all this, when their prophets had foretold this very scene, and when they were fulfilling the predictions of their own scriptures. So wonderful is the way by which God causes his word to be fulfilled.

44. *The thieves also.* The robbers, or highwaymen. Luke says, ch. xxiii. 33, that one of them did it, and that the other reproved him and was penitent. The account in Luke may, however, easily be reconciled with that in Matthew, by supposing that at first, both of them reviled the Saviour, and that it is of this fact that Matthew speaks. Afterwards one of them relented, and became penitent, perhaps from witnessing the patient sufferings of Christ. It is of this particularly that Luke speaks. Or it may be, that what is true of one of the malefactors, is by Matthew attributed to both. The evangelists, when, for the sake of brevity, they avoid particularizing, often attribute to many what is said or done by single persons, meaning no more than that it was done by some one or more of them, without specifying the one. Compare Mark vii. 17, with Matt. xv. 15. Mark v. 31, with Luke viii. 46. Luke ix. 13, with John vi. 8, 9. ¶ *Cast the same in his teeth.* This is a most unhappy translation. It means in the original simply, they upbraided him, or reproached him in the same manner.

45. *Now, from the sixth hour.* That is, from our twelve o'clock. The Jews divided their day into twelve hours, beginning to count at sunrise. ¶ *There was darkness.* This could not have been an eclipse of the sun, for the passover was celebrated at the time of the full moon,

there was darkness <sup>1</sup> over all the land unto the ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. l. 3. Am. viii. 9. Rev. iii. 12; ix. 2.

when the moon is opposite to the sun. Luke says ch. xxiii. 45, that the sun was darkened; but it was not by an eclipse, but, perhaps, by the vapours and clouds that preceded the earthquake. The only cause of this was the interposing power of God, furnishing testimony to the dignity of the sufferer, and causing the elements to sympathise with the pains of his dying Son. It was also peculiarly proper to furnish this testimony when the Sun of righteousness was withdrawing his beams for a time, and the Redeemer of men was expiring. A dark, thick cloud, shutting out the light of day, and clothing every object with the darkness of midnight, was the appropriate drapery with which the world should be clad when the Son of God expired. This darkness was noticed by one at least of the Pagan writers. Phlegon, a Roman astronomer, speaking of the fourteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, which is supposed to be that in which our Saviour died, says, "that the greatest eclipse of the sun that was ever known happened then, for the day was so turned into night that the stars appeared."

¶ *Over all the land.* That is, probably over the whole land of Judea, and perhaps some of the adjacent countries. The extent of the darkness is not known.

¶ *The ninth hour.* Till about three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time the Saviour is supposed to have died.

46. *Eli, Eli, &c.* This language is not pure Hebrew, nor Syriac, but a mixture of both, called commonly Syro-Chaldaic. This was probably the language which Jesus commonly spoke. The words are taken from Psa. xxii. 1. ¶ *My God, my God, &c.* This expression denotes intense suffering. It has been difficult to understand in what sense the Saviour was forsaken by God. It is certain that God approved his work. It is certain that Jesus was innocent. He had done nothing to forfeit the favour of God. God still loved him as his own Son, holy, harmless, undefiled, and obedient. In either of these senses, God could not have forsaken him.

<sup>2</sup> saying, *ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACH-THANI?* that is to say, <sup>3</sup> *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

<sup>2</sup> Heb. v. 7. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxii. 1. Isa. liii. 10. Lam. i. 12.

But the expression was probably used in reference to the following circumstances, viz.: 1. His great bodily sufferings on the cross, greatly aggravated by his previous scourging, and by the want of sympathy, and by the revilings of his enemies on the cross. A person suffering thus, might address God as if he was forsaken, or given up to extreme anguish. 2. He himself said that this was "the power of darkness." Luke xxii. 53. The time when his enemies, including the Jews and Satan, were suffered to do their utmost. It was said of the serpent that he should bruise the heel of the seed of the woman. Gen. iii. 15. By that has been commonly understood to be meant, that though the Messiah should finally crush and destroy the power of Satan, yet he should himself suffer through the power of the devil. When he was tempted, Matt. iv., it was said that the tempter departed from him for a season. There is no improbability in supposing that he might be permitted to return at the time of his death, and exercise his power in increasing the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. In what way this might be done, can be only conjectured. It might be by horrid thoughts; by temptation to despair, or to distrust God, who thus permitted his innocent Son to suffer; or by an increased horror of the pains of dying. 3. Those strong religious consolations; those clear views of the justice and goodness of God, which would have blunted his pains, and soothed his agonies, might have been withheld from the Saviour. Martyrs, under the influence of strong religious feeling, have gone triumphantly to the stake, but it is possible that those views might have been withheld from the Redeemer when he came to die. His sufferings were accumulated sufferings; and the design of the atonement seemed to require that he should suffer all that human nature could be made to endure in so short a time. Yet, 4. We have reason to think that there was still something more than all this that produced this exclamation. Had

47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with <sup>1</sup> vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 34. Psa. lxxix. 21. Luke xxiii. 36. John xix. 29, 30.

there been no deeper and more awful sufferings; it would be difficult to see why Jesus should have shrunk from these sorrows, and used such a remarkable expression. Isaiah tells us, ch. liii. 4, 5, that he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows; that he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; that the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him; that by his stripes we are healed. He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13; he was made a sin-offering, 2 Cor. v. 21; he died in our place, on our account, that he might bring us near to God. It was this, doubtless, which caused his intense sufferings. It was the manifestation of God's hatred of sin to his soul, in some way which he has not explained, that he experienced in that dread hour. It was suffering endured by him, that was due to us; and suffering by which, and by which alone, we can be saved from eternal death.

47. *This man calleth for Elias.* This was done purposely to deride him and his pretensions to be the Messiah. The words, *Eli, Eli*, they might easily pretend that they understood to mean Elias, or so pervert them. The taunt would be more cutting, because it was the universal belief of the Jews, as well as the doctrine of Christ, that Elias would come before the Messiah. They derided him now, as calling upon Elias, when God would not help him; still keeping up the pretensions to being the Messiah, and invoking Elijah to come from the dead to aid him. Or it is possible that this might have been said by some bystanders, who did not understand the language in which he spoke, or who might not have been near enough to hear him distinctly.

48. *One of them ran.* John says, ch. xix. 28, that this was in consequence of Jesus saying, "I thirst." One of the effects of crucifixion was excessive thirst.

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

50 ¶ Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

51 And, behold, the veil <sup>2</sup> of the temple was rent <sup>3</sup> in twain from

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xxvi. 31. Lev. xvi. 2, 15; xxi. 23. 3 Chron. iii. 14. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xxv. 7.

¶ *Took a sponge.* A sponge is a well-known porous substance, that easily absorbs moisture. It was used in this case, because Jesus being elevated, it was difficult to convey a cup to his lips.

¶ *Filled it with vinegar.* This was the common drink of Roman soldiers. It was a light wine, turned sour, and mixed with water. John says, ch. xix. 29, there was a vessel set full of vinegar, probably for the use of the soldiers who watched his crucifixion. ¶ *And put it on a reed.* John says, it was upon hyssop. The hyssop was a shrub, growing so large sometimes as to be called a tree. 1 Kin. iv. 33. The stalk of this was what Matthew calls a reed. The sponge fastened to this could easily be extended to reach the mouth of Jesus. This vinegar Jesus drank, for it was not intended to stupify him, or blunt his sense of pain, like the wine and myrrh.

49. *The rest said, &c.* Still deriding his sufferings, and refusing to allow even the poor consolation of a drink, to assuage the thirst of the Saviour of the world in his dying agonies.

50. *Cried again with a loud voice.* He cried, "It is finished." John xix. 30. It was in the height of his agony, probably attended with deep groaning, and uttered amidst sorrows which were never else experienced in our world. It finished the work of atonement, made the way of salvation possible, rolled away the curse from guilty men, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all true believers. ¶ *Yielded up the ghost.* This, though a literal translation, is unhappy. It means resigned his spirit, or expired. The same phrase is used by the LXX. in describing the death of Rachel. Gen. xxxv. 18.

51. *The veil of the temple.* This was doubtless the veil, curiously wrought, which separated the holy from the most holy place, dividing the temple into two apartments. Exod. xxvi. 31—33. ¶ *In*

to top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of saints which slept arose,

53 And came out of the graves

1 Isa. xvi. 19. Hos. xiii. 14. John v. 25, 28. Dan. xii. 2. 1 Thess. iv. 14.

seism. In two pieces, or parts. This was the time of day when the priest was burning incense in the holy place, and it is probable that he witnessed the rending. The most holy place has been usually considered as a type of heaven, and the rending of the veil to signify that the way to heaven was now open to all, the great High Priest, the Lord Jesus, being about to enter in as the forerunner of his people. However, about the design of the rending of the veil, the scriptures are silent, and conjecture is useless. ¶ *And the earth did quake.* Or shook. Earthquakes are violent convulsions of the ground, caused commonly by confined and rarefied air. This was probably, however, a miraculous convulsion of the earth, in attestation of the truth that the sufferer was the Messiah, the Son of God; and as an exhibition of divine wrath at the crimes of those who put him to death. It was not confined to Judaea, but was felt in other countries. It is mentioned by Roman writers. ¶ *The rocks rent.* That is, were torn asunder. Rocks are still seen about mount Calvary thus rent asunder, which are said to be those that were convulsed when the Saviour died.

52. *And the graves were opened.* Graves, or sepulchres, were most commonly made among the Jews in solid rocks, or in caves of rocks. The rending of the rocks, therefore, would lay them open. The graves were opened by this earthquake, but the dead in them did not rise till after his resurrection. ¶ *And many bodies of saints arose.* Of course it is not known who these were, nor what became of them. It is probable that they were persons who had recently died, and they appear to have been known in Jerusalem. At least had the ancient saints risen, they would not have been unknown, and would not so soon have been credited as those who had recently died. ¶ *Which slept.* Which had died. The

death of saints is often called sleep. Dan. xii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 18. 1 Thess. iv. 15.

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and

1 Cor. xv. 20. 4 Mark xv. 39. Luke xxiii. 47—49.

death of saints is often called sleep. Dan. xii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 18. 1 Thess. iv. 15.

53. *And came out of the graves after his resurrection.* The narrative of Matthew does not determine whether they came to life before Jesus rose, and remained in the tombs, or came to life after he died. The latter is the probable opinion. There is nothing said of the reason why they were raised. It is not improbable that amidst the other wonders attending the death of Jesus, this was designed to convince the Jews that he was the Messiah. Perhaps some who had been his open friends were raised up now as an attestation that he in whom they had believed, was the Christ. What became of them after they had entered into the city, whether they again died, or ascended to heaven, is not revealed, and conjecture is vain. ¶ *The holy city.* Jerusalem, called holy because the temple was there, because it was devoted to God, and was the place of the religious solemnities of the people.

54. *Now when the centurion, &c. Centurion,* a captain of a hundred soldiers. He was here placed over the band that attended the crucifixion. ¶ *They feared greatly.* They regarded these things as proof that God was angry, and they were terrified at the prospect that vengeance was coming on them. ¶ *Truly this was the Son of God.* They had heard, probably, that before Pilate he professed to be the Son of God. Seeing these wonders, they believed that he was true, and that God was now attesting the truth of his professions. The centurion was a heathen, and had probably no very distinct notions of the phrase *the Son of God*; perhaps understanding by it only that he was like the heathen heroes who had been deified; but he certainly regarded these wonders as proof that he was what he professed to be. In the original it is, "a son of a god;" an expression perfectly suitable to

those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which <sup>1</sup> followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him :

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Josés, and the mother of Zebedee's children. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke viii. 2, 3. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xxviii. 1. Luke xxiv. 10. John xx. 1, 18.

a polytheist, who believed in the existence of many gods. Mark, ch. xv. 39, says, that they affirmed that "this man was the Son of God." Luke, ch. xxiii. 47, that they said, "certainly this was a righteous man." These things were said by different persons, or at different periods of his sufferings, one evangelist having recorded one saying, and another another.

55. *Beholding afar off.* They were probably not suffered to come near the cross, because it was surrounded by soldiers. They witnessed, with intense feelings, his sufferings from some convenient place as near as they could approach. ¶ *Ministering unto him.* Attending him, and providing for his wants. While multitudes of men joined in the cry, Crucify him, and forsook him in his trying moments, it does not appear that any of his female followers were thus unfaithful. In the midst of all his trials, and all the contempt poured upon him, they adhered to their Redeemer. Never did female constancy shine more brightly, and never was a happier example set for all who should afterwards believe on him.

56. *Mary Magdalene.* Mary of Magdala. She had peculiar cause of attachment to the Saviour, having been relieved by him of a most dreadful calamity, and restored to her right mind, after being possessed by seven devils. Mark xvi. 9.

¶ *And the mother of Zebedee's children.* That is, James and John. Matt. x. 2. Her name was Salome. Mark xv. 40.

57. *When the even was come.* That is, sometime after three o'clock in the afternoon. Before this, the Jews had besought Pilate that the legs of those who were crucified might be broken, and the bodies

57 When <sup>3</sup> the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple :

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

<sup>3</sup> Mark xv. 42. Luke xxiii. 50. John xix. 38.

be taken down, that they might not remain on the cross during the sabbath. The soldiers coming to Jesus, for that purpose, found that he was already dead, contrary to their expectation. A soldier, however, thrust a spear into his side, and there was furnished the fullest proof that he had expired. See Notes on John xix. 31—37. ¶ *A rich man of Arimathea.* It is uncertain where Arimathea was. There were several cities of that name in Judea. It is commonly supposed to be the same as Rama. See Note on ch. ii. 17. Luke says that this was a city of the Jews, and it is probable, therefore, that it was in the tribe of Benjamin, and but a short distance from Jerusalem. This man sustained a high character. He was an "honourable counsellor;" Mark xv. 43, "he waited for the kingdom of God;" he was "a good man and a just;" he had nobly set himself against the wicked purposes of the sanhedrim, Luke xxiii. 61; he was a disciple of Jesus, though he was not openly his follower, because he feared the Jews. John xix. 38.

58. *He went to Pilate.* Because no one had a right to remove the body but the magistrate. He was condemned to be crucified, usually a long and most bitter death, and in common cases, it would have been unlawful to remove the body so soon.

59. *He wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.* John adds, that this was done with spices, ch. xix. 40. The Jews were accustomed to use myrrh, aloes, and other aromatics, in large quantities, when they buried their dead. When they were not regularly embalmed, which was a long and tedious process, they enclosed

60 And<sup>1</sup> laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 ¶ Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 9.

the spices in the folds of the linen, or wrapped the body in it. Spices were sometimes used in such quantities as to form a heap or bed, on which the dead body was laid. Thus it is said of Asa, 2 Chron. xvi. 14, "they laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and spices," &c. There not being time properly to embalm the body of Jesus, he was buried in this manner. The women who attended him, either not being aware of this, or desirous of showing a further regard for him, returned from the sepulchre on the first day of the week, and prepared other spices with which to embalm him. Luke xxiii. 56; xiv. 1.

60. *In his own new tomb.* John says, ch. xix. 41, that this was in a garden that was in or near the place where he was crucified. This tomb Joseph had prepared for himself, as was not uncommon among the Jews. In this tomb, Luke and John inform us that no man had been laid. This was so ordered, in the providence of God, doubtless, that there might be no suspicion about the identity of Jesus when he rose; that it might not be alleged that another person had risen; or that he was raised by touching the bones of some prophet, as happened to the corpse that touched the bones of Elisha. 2 Kin. xiii. 21. Further, by being buried here, an important prophecy, Isa. liii. 9, was remarkably fulfilled. The fulfilment of this is the more remarkable, because during his life he associated with the poor, and was himself poor. ¶ *Which he had hewn out in the rock.* This was a common way of constructing tombs in Judea. See Note, ch. viii. 28. Being

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver<sup>2</sup> said, while he was yet alive, After<sup>3</sup> three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night,<sup>4</sup> and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxi. 30. John vii. 12, 47. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 21; xvii. 23; xx. 19. Luke xxiv. 6, 7. John ii. 19. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xxviii. 13.

cut out of a rock, there was no way by which the disciples could have access to it but by the entrance, at which the guard was placed, and consequently it was impossible for them to steal him away. The sepulchre thus secure, was rendered more so by rolling a great stone at its entrance; all possible precautions thus being used, in the providence of God, against imposition and deceit.

62. *Now, the next day that followed the day of the preparation.* The first day of the feast of the passover was called the day of preparation, because all things were on that day got in readiness for the observances of the paschal week. The Jewish day closed at sunset, and the sabbath at that time commenced. The next day mentioned here does not mean the following day in our acceptation of the word, or the following morning, but the next day in the Jewish way of speaking; that is, after the next day had commenced, or after sundown. To suppose them to have waited till the next morning, would be absurd: as the disciples would be as likely to steal him away the first night as the second.

63. *We remember.* They had either heard him say this, or, more probably, had understood that this was one of his doctrines. ¶ *That deceiver.* One of the charges against him was, that he deceived the people. By this title they still chose to designate him, thinking that his death had fully confirmed the truth of the charges against him.

64. *Until the third day.* That is, during two nights and the intervening day. This proves that when the Jews spoke of three days, they did not of ne-



44. *Place and time when Ye have a watch.* 21. *Post very make it to sure as ye can.*

45. *For they were and made the sepulchre were rolling the stone and setting a watch.*

# CHAPTER XXVIII.

Christ's resurrection, 1-7. The women see Christ, 9, 10. The concerted false-  
hood, 11-13.

every week three whole days, but parts of those days, as was the case in our brother's lying in the grave. "The last error shall be worse than the first. That is, the act of deceiving, or taking him from the tomb, pretending that he rose, shall have a worse influence among the people than the first, or his pretending to be the Messiah.

45. *Ye have a watch.* The Jews had a guard or watch of Roman soldiers, who kept watch in the tower of Antonia, on the north-west of the temple. Pilate never referred to them, or to the watch that attended the crucifixion; the whole band that had been appointed for that. As the torments of crucifixion sometimes lasted many days, the band had been probably granted to them for that time, and they were, therefore, still at the direction of the chief priests.

46. *Sealing the stone.* The sepulchre was made sure, by affixing the large stone to the entrance in such a way that it could not be removed without detection. It was sealed. In what way this was done, cannot now be certainly told. The cave in which Daniel was cast was fastened in the same manner, and sealed with the king's signet, Dan. vi. 17, perhaps by fastening the stone in its place with cords, which were brought together, and united with wax, and impressing on that the seal of the king. In this way letters and books were anciently sealed. Possibly on the sepulchre of Jesus was impressed in this manner the seal of Pilate, the seal of office, making it doubly sure. Or it may be that the stone was fitted into the tomb with clay or cement, and on that was impressed the seal of Pilate. ¶ *Setting a watch.* That is, as large a number of soldiers as they judged necessary to secure the tomb.

We cannot but be struck with the wis-

dom of God, in ordering the circumstances of the Saviour's burial in such a manner as to avoid the possibility of deception. Had all this been done by his friends, it might have been said that they only pretended to secure the tomb, and only pretended that he was dead. But he was adjudged to be dead by the Jews themselves; Pilate was satisfied that that was the fact; they had their own way about his burial; he was buried alone; the place of his sepulchre was made sure, expressly to prevent his being removed; and they placed around him a guard, in their own judgment, large enough to prevent his being taken away by force or strength. His very enemies, therefore, took every possible precaution to place his resurrection beyond the possibility of suspicion of fraud and imposture, and were the very means of furnishing the most striking proof that his death, burial, and resurrection, were not impositions, but most affecting, awful, and yet cheering realities.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

1. *In the end of the sabbath.* The word *end* here means the same as *after* the sabbath; i. e., after the sabbath was fully completed, or finished, and may be expressed in this manner: In the night following the sabbath, for the sabbath closed at sunset, as it began to dawn, &c. ¶ *As it began to dawn towards the first day of the week.* The word *dawn* is not a necessity in the original. The word there properly means, as the first day approached, or drew on, without specifying the precise time. Mark says, ch. xvi 1, 2, that it was after "the sabbath was past, and very early in the morning, as the rising of the sun;" i. e., not that the sun was risen, but that it was about to rise, or at the early break of day. Luk

2 And, behold, there<sup>1</sup> was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the

stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His<sup>2</sup> countenance was like

<sup>1</sup> Or, had been. Acts xvi. 26. Rev. xi. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. civ. 4. Ezek. i. 4, 13, 14. Dan. x. 6. Rev. i. 14—16.

says, ch. xxiv. 1, that it was "very early;" in the Greek, "deep twilight," or when there was scarcely any light. John says, ch. xx. 1, it was "very early, while it was yet dark." That is, it was not yet full daylight, or the sun had not yet risen. The time when they came, therefore, was at the break of day, when the sun was about to rise, but while it was yet so dark as to render objects obscure, or not distinctly visible. ¶ *The first day of the week.* The day which is observed by Christians as the sabbath. The Jews observed the seventh day of the week, or our Saturday. During that day our Saviour was in the grave. As he rose on the morning of the first day, it has always been observed, in commemoration of so glorious an event. ¶ *Came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.* From Mary Magdalene Christ had cast out seven devils. Grateful for his great mercy, she was one of his firmest and most faithful followers, and was first at the sepulchre, and was first permitted to see her risen Lord. The other Mary was not the mother of Jesus, but the mother of James and Joseph. (Mark.) Mark says that Salome attended them. Salome was the wife of Zebedee, and the mother of James and John. From Luke xiv. 10, it appears that Joanna, wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, see Luke viii. 3, was with them. These four women, Mark says, having bought sweet spices, came to anoint him. They had prepared a part of them on the evening before the sabbath. Luke xxiii. 56. They now completed the preparation, and brought more: or it may be that it means merely that having bought sweet spices, without specifying the time when, they came now to embalm him. John mentions only Mary Magdalene. He does this probably because his object was to give a particular account of her interview with the risen Saviour. There is no contradiction among the evangelists. For while one mentions only the names of a part only who were there, he does not deny that others were present also. It is an old maxim that

"he who mentions a few, does not deny that there are more." ¶ *To see the sepulchre.* To see whether it was as it had been left on the evening when he was laid there. To see if the stone was still there, by which they would know that he had not been removed. Mark and Luke say that the design of their coming was to anoint him with the sweet spices which they had prepared. Matthew does not mention that, but he does not deny that that was the ultimate design of their coming. It is not improbable that they might have known the manner in which he was buried, with a large quantity of myrrh and aloes. But that was done in haste; it was done by depositing the myrrh and aloes, without mixture or preparation, in the grave-clothes. They came that they might embalm his body more deliberately, or at least that they might anoint the bandages, and complete the work of embalming.

2. *There was a great earthquake.* Rather there had been. It does not mean that this was while they were there, or while they were going, but that there had been so violent a commotion as to remove the stone. The word here rendered *earthquake* does not of necessity mean that the convulsion extended to the earth, but only that there had been such a concussion as to remove the stone. ¶ *And sat upon it.* Sat upon it when the keepers saw him. It is not said that he was sitting when he appeared to the women. From Luke, it would rather appear that he was standing.

3. *His countenance.* In our language, the word *countenance* refers to the face only. In the original, it refers to his whole person. His general aspect, or the appearance of the angel himself, was &c. ¶ *Like lightning.* Peculiarly bright and shining. ¶ *His raiment white as snow.* Celestial beings are usually represented as clothed in white. Dan. vii. 9. Acts i. 10. Rev. iii. 4, 5; iv. 4; vii. 13, 14. White, among the Jews, was the symbol of purity, or innocence.

lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

5 And the angel answered <sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 14.

4. *The keepers did shake.* It was night. The appearance was sudden and unexpected, and to them terrific. The stone was probably suddenly removed. At the noise, the light, the suddenness of the appearance, they were affrighted. ¶ *And became as dead men.* Probably by terror they fainted, or were thrown into a swoon. At this time it is probable that the Lord Jesus arose; and hence he was not seen by them when he came forth. At what precise time of the night this was, we are not certainly informed. The narrative, however, leads us to suppose that it was not long before the women came to the sepulchre, or near the break of day.

5. *And the angel answered and said,* &c. This was not on the outside of the tomb, for Matthew does not say that the angel appeared to the women then, but only to the keepers. Mark says, "entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment." Ch. xvi. 5. Luke says, ch. xxiv. 3, "they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus; and as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments." Seeing the stone rolled away, and the sepulchre open, they of course anxiously entered into it, to see if the body was there. They did not find it, and there they saw the vision of the angels, who gave them information respecting his resurrection. Infidels have objected that there are three inconsistencies in the accounts by Mark and Luke: 1. That Mark says the angel was sitting, and Luke says they were standing. *Answer.* The word in Luke does not of necessity mean that they stood, but only that they were present. Or it may be that the one that Mark mentions was sitting when they entered, and then arose. 2. It is objected that Luke mentions two, but Mark and Matthew one. *Answer.* Mark mentions the one who spoke; for it

said unto the women, Fear not ye: for <sup>2</sup> I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.<sup>3</sup> Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

<sup>2</sup> Psal. cv. 3, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xxvii. 63.

cannot be supposed they both spake the same thing. He does not deny that another was present with him. Luke affirms that there was. This way of speaking is not unfrequent. Thus Mark and Luke mention only one demoniac who was cured at Gadara. Matthew mentions two. In like manner, Mark and Luke speak of only one blind man who was cured at Jericho, while from Matthew it is certain that two were. The fact that but one is mentioned, where it is not denied that there were others, does not prove that there could not be others. 3. Matthew calls this an angel. Mark and Luke a man. *Answer.* Angels, in the scriptures, from appearing in the form of men, are often called as they appear, and are mentioned as men. See Gen. xviii. 2, 16, 33; xix. 1, 5. ¶ *Fear not ye.* The cause of their fear was, doubtless, the appearance of the angels; or the word *fear* may be taken in a wider sense, and may mean agitated or troubled. Thus, be not agitated or troubled, that you do not find the body of the Saviour. I know that ye seek him, and are troubled that he is removed; but you need not fear that he has been stolen. You will see him again in Galilee.

6. *He is risen, as he said.* He had often predicted that he would rise, but the disciples did not understand it, and consequently did not expect it. Matt. xvi. 31; xx. 19. ¶ *The place where the Lord lay.* The place where a body was deposited in a sepulchre was commonly a niche cut in the wall of the sepulchre. The sepulchre was usually large; that of David was more than a hundred feet in length, cut out of solid rock under ground, and separated into various apartments. All round the sides of those apartments were niches for the dead; or they were ranged around the sides, in places cut in the solid rock just large enough to contain the body. In such a place our Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen<sup>1</sup> from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there<sup>2</sup> shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 34. <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 4. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 16, 17.

7. *Tell his disciples.* Mark adds particularly, "tell Peter." This was a kind message to Peter, who had so recently denied his Lord. It would serve to cheer him in his despondency, and to assure him that his sin had been forgiven; and it shows the tender love and remembrance of Jesus, even for his unfaithful friends.

8. *And they departed quickly.* Joyful at the news, and wishing to impart it to all, they fled to find the disciples, to tell them that the Lord was risen. ¶ *With fear and great joy.* Fear, 1. At the wonderful scenes which they had witnessed, the stone rolled away, and the presence of an angel. 2. A confused state of mind, apprehensive, perhaps, that it might not after all be true. The news was too good to be credited at once. Yet they had sufficient belief in it to fill them with great and unexpected joy. Perhaps no language could better express the state of their minds, the mingled awe and rejoicing, than that which is here used. ¶ *And did run, &c.* They ran to announce what they had seen to the disciples. The city, where the disciples were, was half a mile or more from the place.

9. *And as they went—Jesus met them.* This was when they left the sepulchre the second time. Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene, when alone. John xx. 14. Afterwards he appeared to the other women, as related by Matthew. See the accounts of the resurrection harmonized, at the end of this chapter. ¶ *All hail.* This is a term of salutation. The word *all* has been supplied by the translators. It is not in the original. The meaning of the word *hail* here is rejoice; a term of salutation connected with the idea of joy, joy at his resurrection, and at meeting them again. ¶ *Held him by the feet.* Or threw themselves prostrate before him.

9 ¶ And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail.<sup>3</sup> And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren<sup>4</sup> that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

<sup>3</sup> John xx. 19. <sup>4</sup> Heb. ii. 11.

This was the usual posture of supplication. See 2 Kin. iv. 37. It does not mean that they took hold of his feet, but only that they cast themselves down before him. ¶ *And worshipped him.* See Note, ch. viii. 2. In this place the word *worship* seems to denote the homage due to the Messiah risen from the dead; regarded by them now in a proper light, and entitled to the honour which was due to God, agreeably to John v. 23.

10. *Be not afraid.* The ancients, when in the presence of a heavenly being, an angel, or one who was supposed to be possessed of divine power, were commonly struck with great fear, as well as a great sense of their unworthiness. See Judg. vi. 22, 23; xiii. 21, 22. Luke v. 8. The women were in like manner alarmed when they saw Jesus, believing him now peculiarly to be a divine being; seeing him returning from the regions of the dead; and doubtless impressed with a new consciousness that they were unworthy of being in his presence. Jesus comforted them. He was the same Jesus with whom they had been before his death; and they had no reason now to fear him. ¶ *Go tell my brethren.* There is something exceedingly tender in the appellation here used, "my brethren." Though he was risen from the dead; though about to be exalted to heaven; yet he did not disdain to call his disciples his brethren. This was calculated still further to silence the fears of the women, and inspire them with confidence. ¶ *Into Galilee.* Galilee was the northern part of the land. There the Saviour commenced his ministry; and there, away from the noise and confusion of the city, he purposed again to meet the disciples, in retirement and quietness, to satisfy them of his resurrection, and to commission them to

11 ¶ Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

go forth and preach the everlasting gospel.

11. *When they were going.* Or when they had gone from the tomb. ¶ *Some of the watch.* Some of the guard that had been set around the tomb to keep it safe. Probably the leaders, or officers, came to give a true account of what had happened. ¶ *Showed unto the chief priests.* To Annas and Caiaphas.

12. *And when they were assembled, &c.* They deemed the matter of so much importance as to justify the calling together of the great council of the nation. Notwithstanding all their caution, it was plain that the body of Jesus was gone. It was further plain that the disciples would affirm that he was raised. It was not improbable that Jesus would himself appear, and convince multitudes that he was the Messiah; and that the guilt of putting him to death would, after all their caution and cunning, be charged on them. They had been at great pains to procure his death. They had convinced Pilate that he was dead. They had placed a guard for the express purpose of preventing his being taken. It would be in vain after this to pretend that he was not dead; that he was in a swoon; that he died in appearance only. They had shut themselves out from this, which would have been the most plausible plea, and whatever course they might now adopt, they were obliged to proceed on the admission that he had been really dead, and that all proper measures had been taken to prevent his being stolen. They concluded, after consultation, that but one way was left, to bribe the soldiers, to induce them to tell a falsehood, and to attempt to convince the world that Jesus, in spite of themselves, and in the face of all probability, had been really stolen. ¶ *Large money.* Much money. This

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciple came by night, and stole<sup>1</sup> him away while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him and secure you.

15 So they took the money and did as they were taught: <sup>2</sup> a

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxvii. 64.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 10.

was given to bribe them, to induce them to conceal the truth, and to affirm what they knew was false.

14. *The governor's ears.* To Pilate. If it is reported to him that Jesus is stolen while you slept. ¶ *We will persuade him.* We will convince or satisfy him, so that he shall not punish you. This they might promise with safe For, 1. They knew from the character of Pilate that he could be easily bribed. 2. Pilate, after the feast of the passover was accustomed to return to Caesar. He had not been inclined at all to interfere in anything concerning the Saviour until it was urged upon him by the Jews. He would not be disposed of himself to take any further trouble about the matter. He would feel that all that could be demanded of him had been done, and would not be disposed further to interfere unless the sanhedrim should demand it. This of course they would not do.

15. *This saying is—reported.* The account of the disappearance of the body of Jesus from the sepulchre is commonly given. ¶ *Until this day.* The time when Matthew wrote this gospel, i. e. about thirty years after the resurrection.

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus which an account is given in this chapter is one of the most important doctrines of the Christian religion, and is attested by the strongest evidence that can be adduced in favour of any ancient fact. Let it be considered: 1. That he had often testified his own death and resurrection. See Matt. xii. 40; xvi. 21; xx. 2. There was no doubt that he was really dead. Of this the Jews, the Romans and the disciples, were all equally satisfied. 3. Every proper precaution was taken to prevent his removal by stealth. A guard, usually consisting of sixty men was placed there for the express purpose

saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

eping him, and the sepulchre was sealed by a large stone, and by a seal. On the third day the body was missing. All were agreed. The high priest would not dare to call that in question.

laboured, therefore, to account for the disciples affirmed that he was

The Jews hired the Roman soldiers to affirm that he was stolen while they slept and succeeded in making many of the people believe it. This account of the Jews is attended with the following difficulties and absurdities: 1. The Roman guard was composed usually of sixty men and they were stationed there for the express purpose of guarding the body of Jesus. 2. The punishment of sleep on guard in the Roman army was death, and it is perfectly incredible that they should expose themselves in that manner to death. 3. The disciples were few in number, unarmed, weak, and

They had just fled before those who took Jesus in the garden, and how could they be believed that in so short a time they would dare to attempt to take away a Roman guard of armed men who were expressly set to defend? 4. How could the disciples presume that they could find them asleep; or if they did, how was it possible to remove the body, without awaking one of their number. 5. The regularity and order of the grave-clothes, John xx. 6, 7, that the body had not been stolen.

men rob graves of the bodies of the dead, they do not wait coolly to fold the grave-clothes, and lay them carefully themselves. 6. If the soldiers were asleep, how did they, or how could they know that the disciples stole the body away? If they were awake, why did they suffer it? The whole account, therefore, was intrinsically absurd. On the other hand, the account given by the Jews was perfectly natural. 1. They did not for the reason why the soldiers did not see the Saviour when he rose. 2. They were fixed at the vision of an angel, they were as dead men. 3. They affirmed that they saw him. All the apostles agreed in this, and many others. 4. They agreed that in Jerusalem, in the presence of the Jews, before the high priest and the people. See the Acts of the Apostles.

If the Jews really believed the account which they themselves had given, why did they not apprehend the apostles, and prove them guilty of theft, and of falsehood: things which they never attempted, and which show, therefore, that they did not credit their own report. 4. In regard to the Saviour, the disciples could not be deceived. They had been with him three years. They knew him as a friend. They again ate and drank with him; they put their fingers into his hands and side; they conversed with him; they were with him forty days. There were enough of them to bear witness. Law commonly requires not more than one or two competent witnesses, but here were eleven plain, honest men, who affirmed in all places, and at all times, that they had seen him. Can it be possible that they could be deceived? Then all faith in testimony must be given up. 5. They gave every possible evidence of their sincerity. They were persecuted, ridiculed, scourged, and put to death for affirming this. Yet not one of them ever expressed the least doubt of its truth. They bore everything rather than deny that they had seen him. They had no motive in doing this, but the love of truth. They obtained no wealth by it, no honour, no pleasure. They gave themselves up to great and unparalleled sufferings, going from land to land, crossing almost every sea, and enduring the dangers, toils, and privations of almost every clime, for the simple object of affirming everywhere that the Saviour died and rose. If they knew this was an imposition, and if it had been they would have known it, in what way is this remarkable conduct to be accounted for? Do men conduct themselves in this way for nought? And especially in a plain case, where all that can be required is the testimony of the senses? 6. The world believed them. Three thousand of the Jews themselves believed on the day of Pentecost, only fifty days after the resurrection. Acts ii. 41. Multitudes of other Jews believed during the lives of the apostles. Thousands of Gentiles believed also, and in three hundred years the belief that Jesus rose had spread over and changed the whole Roman empire. Had the apostles

16 ¶ Then <sup>1</sup> the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they <sup>2</sup> saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and spake

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxvi. 32. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xvi. 28.

been deceivers, that was the age in which they could most easily have been detected. Yet that was the age when converts were most rapidly multiplied, and God affixed his seal to their testimony that it was true.

16. *Then the eleven disciples.* Judas was dead, leaving but eleven of the original number of the apostles, ¶ *Into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.* This appointment is recorded in Matt. xxvi. 42. On what particular mountain this was is not known. It is probable that Jesus, when he made the appointment, specified the place, which has been omitted by the evangelists. Matthew has omitted many appearances which Jesus made to his disciples which have been recorded by Luke, John, and Paul. See the harmony of Christ's appearances after the resurrection at the end of the chapter.

17. *They worshipped him.* Paid him honour as the Messiah. ¶ *But some doubted.* As, for example, Thomas. John xx. 25. The disciples had not expected his resurrection, they were therefore slow to believe. The mention of their doubting shows that they were honest men, that they were not easily imposed on, that they had not previously agreed to affirm that he had risen, that they were convinced only by the strength of the evidence. Their caution in examining the evidence, their slowness to believe, and their firm conviction after all their doubts, and their willingness to show their conviction even to death, is most conclusive proof that they were not deceived in regard to the fact of his resurrection.

18. *All power is given me in heaven and in earth.* The Son of God, as Creator, had an original right to all things, to control them and dispose of them. See John i. 3. Col. i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 8. But the universe is put under

unto them, saying, All <sup>3</sup> power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go <sup>4</sup> ye therefore, and <sup>5</sup> teach

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xi. 27. Psa. li. 6; lxxxix. 19; ex. 1—3 Isa. ix. 6, 7. Dan. vii. 14. Luke i. 32. John xvii. 2. Rom. xiv. 9. Eph. i. 20, 21. Heb. ii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. xi. 18. <sup>4</sup> Mark xvi. 15. <sup>5</sup> Or, *make disciples, or, Christians of all nations.*

him more particularly as Mediator, that he might redeem his people, that he might gather a church, that he might defend his chosen, that he might subdue all their enemies, and bring them off conquerors and more than conquerors John v. 22, 23. 1 Cor. xv. 25—27. Eph. i. 20—23. Phil. ii. 6—11. It is in reference to this, doubtless, that he speak here; power or authority was committed to him over all things, that he might redeem, defend, and save the church purchased with his own blood. His mediatorial government extends, therefore, over the material world, over angels, over devils over wicked men, and over his own people.

19. *Go ye therefore.* Because all power is mine, go. I can defend you. The world is placed under my control. It is redeemed. It is given me in promise by my Father, as the purchase of my death. Though you are weak, yet I am strong. Though you will encounter many troubles and dangers, yet I can defend you. Though you die, yet I live, and the work shall be accomplished. ¶ *Teach all nations.* The word rendered *teach* here, is not the one that is usually so translated in the New Testament. This word properly means *disciple, make disciples of all nations.* This was to be done, however, by teaching them, and by administering the rite of baptism. ¶ *All nations.* The gracious commission was the foundation of the authority to go to the Gentiles. The Jews had expected that the offer of a life under the Messiah would be confined to their own nation. Jesus broke down the partition wall, and commissioned his disciples to go every where, and bring the world to the knowledge of himself. ¶ *Baptizing them.* Applying to them water, as an emblem of the purifying influences of the christian religion through the Holy Spirit, and solemnly devoting them to God. ¶ *In the name, &c.* This

<sup>1</sup> all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

20 Teaching <sup>2</sup> them to observe

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lii. 10. Rom. x. 18. <sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 42. 1 Cor. xii. 2.

phrase does not mean, here, by the authority of the Father, &c. To be baptized in the name of the Father, &c., is the same as to be baptized unto the Father, as to believe on the name of Christ is the same as to believe on Christ. John i. 12; ii. 23; iii. 18. 1 Cor. i. 13. To be baptized unto any one is publicly to receive and adopt him as a religious teacher or lawgiver; to receive his system of religion. Thus the Jews were baptized unto Moses. 1 Cor. x. 2. That is, they received the system that he taught; they acknowledged him as their lawgiver and teacher. So Paul asks, 1 Cor. i. 13, "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" i. e., were you devoted to Paul by this rite? Did you bind yourselves to him, and give yourselves away to him, or to God? So to be baptized in the name of the Father, &c., means publicly, by a significant rite, to receive the system of religion, to bind the soul to obey his laws, to be devoted to him, to receive, as the guide and comforter of the life, his system of religion, to obey his laws, and trust to his promises. To be baptized unto the Son, in like manner, is to receive him as the Messiah, our Prophet, Priest, and King; to submit to his laws, and to receive him as the Saviour of the soul. To be baptized unto the Holy Ghost is to receive him publicly as the Sanctifier, Comforter, and guide of the soul. The meaning, then, may be thus expressed: Baptizing them unto the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by a solemn profession of the only true religion, and by a solemn devotion to the service of the sacred Trinity.

The union of these three names in the form of baptism proves that the Son and Holy Ghost are equal with the Father. Nothing would be more absurd or blasphemous than to unite the name of a creature, a man or an angel, with the name of the ever-living God, in this

all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I <sup>3</sup> am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xviii. 20. Exod. iii. 12. Josh. i. 5. Isa. viii. 10; xli. 10. John xiv. 18, 19. Rev. i. 18.

solemn rite. If Jesus was a mere man or an angel, as is held by many who deny his divinity; and if the Holy Ghost was a mere attribute of God; then it would have been the height of absurdity to use a form like this, or to direct the apostles to baptize men unto them. How absurd would be the direction, nay, how blasphemous, to have said, "Baptize them unto God, and unto Paul, and unto the wisdom or power of God!" Can we believe that our Saviour would have given a direction so absurd as this? Yet, unless he himself was divine, and the Holy Spirit was divine, Jesus gave a direction substantially the same as this. The form of baptism, therefore, has been always understood as an irrefragable argument for the doctrine of the Trinity, or that the Son and Holy Spirit are equal with the Father.

20. *Lo, I am with you.* That is, by my Spirit, my providence, my attending counsel and guidance. I will strengthen, assist, and guide you. This also proves that Christ is divine. If a mere man, or a creature of the highest order, how could he promise to be with his disciples always, or at all? They would be scattered far and wide. His disciples would greatly increase. If he was with them always, he was God; for no finite creature could thus be present with many men scattered in different parts of the world. ¶ *Unto the end of the world.* The word rendered *world*, here, sometimes means *age* or *state*; and by some it has been supposed to mean, I will be with you until the end of this age, or during the continuance of the Jewish state, to the destruction of Jerusalem. But as the presence of Christ was no less necessary after that than before, there seems to be no propriety in limiting the promise to his own age. It may, therefore, be considered as a gracious promise to aid, strengthen, guide and defend all his disciples, but more especially his ministers, to the end of time.



## MATTHEW.

### HARMONY OF THE ACCOUNTS

#### OF THE

#### RESURRECTION, APPEARANCES, AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

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##### I. THE RESURRECTION.

As there has been much difficulty felt in reconciling the accounts of the different evangelists respecting the resurrection of Christ, and as infidels have maintained that they are utterly irreconcilable, it may be proper, in closing the Notes on Matthew, to give these accounts at one view. One thing should always be borne in mind by all who read the gospels, viz.: that the sacred narrative of an event is what it is declared to be by all the evangelists. That a thing is omitted by one does not prove that another is false because he has declared it; for the very object of the different gospels was to give the testimony of independent witnesses to the great facts of the life and death of Jesus. Nor does it prove that there is a contradiction because one relates facts in a different order from another; for neither of them professes to relate facts in the precise order in which they occurred. The object was to relate the facts themselves. With these principles in view, which are conceded to profane historians always, let us look at the accounts which are presented in the sacred narrative respecting the resurrection, appearance, and ascension of Christ.

1. Jesus was laid in the tomb on Friday evening, having been wrapped in linen with myrrh and aloes, in a hurried manner. John xix. 39, 40. The women, not apprised of that, or desiring to testify their regard further, prepared spices on the same evening to embalm him. Luke xxiii. 56. As it was too late that night to complete the preparation, they deferred it till the first day of the week, resting on the sabbath. Luke xxiii. 56.

2. On the first day of the week, early, the women completed their preparation, purchased more spices and properly mixed them to make an *unguent* to anoint the bandages in which the body was rolled. Mark xvi. 1. Or this may refer to the same purchase as is mentioned by Luke. They had bought them, i.e., on Friday evening.

3. They came to the sepulchre just as the day began to dawn, or just as the light appeared in the east, yet so dark as to render objects indistinct. It was "in the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week." Matt. xxviii. 1. "Very early in the morning, at the rising of the sun;" or as the sun was about to rise. Mark xvi. 2. "Very early in the morning." Luke xxiv. 1. "Early, while it was yet dark." John xx. 1.

4. The persons who came were Mary Magdalene, Matt. xxviii. 1. John xx. 1. Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, Matt. xxviii. 1. Luke xxiv. 10. Mark xv. 40. Salome, the wife of Zebedee, and mother of James and John. Compare Matt. xxvii. 56. Mark xv. 40. Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, compare Luke viii. 3; xxiv. 10; and certain others not specified. Luke xxiv. 1, 10.

5. The object of their coming: 1. To see the sepulchre. Matt. xxviii. 1. 2. To embalm him, or to finish embalming him. Mark xvi. 1. Luke xxiv. 1.

## HARMONY OF THE RESURRECTION, ETC.

1. While on the way, they inquired who should roll away the stone for them, that y might have access to the body of Jesus. Mark xvi. 3.
2. When they arrived, they found that there had been an earthquake, or shaking the tomb, so that the stone was rolled away. Matt. xxviii. 2. Mark xvi. 4.
3. The angel, who rolled the stone away, had sat down on it, and appeared to the pers, and frightened them; though he did not appear in this place to the women, only to the keepers. Matt. xxviii. 2—4. At that time probably our Saviour risen; how long before the women came there is not known, and cannot be ascertained.
4. When they came there, Mary Magdalene, greatly agitated with the ap- urance, and probably supposing that the body had been stolen, left the other men, and ran to the city, at the distance of half a mile, to inform the disciples. hn xx. 2.
5. While Mary was gone, the others probably looked round the garden in search the body, and then came and examined the sepulchre to see if it was not there. e tomb was large, and they entered into it. There "the angel spake unto them." ut. xxviii. 5. "They saw a young man"—i. e., an angel in the appearance of a ung man, "sitting on the right side." Mark xvi. 5. When they entered he was ing; as they entered he rose and stood. Luke xxiv. 4. Luke adds that there s another with him, xxiv. 4; this other one was not seen when they entered into e sepulchre, at the time mentioned by Mark; but was seen when they had fully ered in, as mentioned by Luke.
6. The angel charged them to go and tell the disciples and Peter, Matt. viii. 7, Mark xvi. 7, and to assure them that Jesus would see them in Galilee. The gel also reminded them of what Jesus had said when they were in Galilee. Luke iv. 6, 7.
7. They went immediately towards the city, yet taking a different way from the e Mary had taken, or going in such a way that they did not meet her when she s returning from the city with Peter and John. Matt. xxviii. 8. Mark xvi. 8. They said nothing to any man." Luke xxiv. 9, 10. In Luke xxiv. 10, it is said t it was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, that told ee things to the disciples. Not that Luke affirms that they were together when y told them, but that the information was given by them, though perhaps at ferent times.
8. While they were gone, Mary Magdalene returned to the sepulchre, following ter and John, who came running. John xx. 2—9. They examined the sepulchre, d found that the body was really gone; but as yet they did not know the reason, t having scen the other women to whom the angel had told the cause, and Mary gdalene having left the women before the angel had spoken to them. As yet, efore, she was ignorant of the reason of his removal.
9. Peter and John then left the sepulchre, returned home, and left Mary alone. hn xx. 10.
10. While Mary was there alone, she looked into the sepulchre, and saw two gels, probably the same that had appeared to the other women. John xx. 11—13.
11. Jesus appeared to Mary while she was alone at the sepulchre. John xx. —18. Thus, according to Mark, xvi. 9, he appeared to Mary Magdalene "first."
12. Mary then went to tell the disciples that she had seen him, but they did not y believe her. Mark xvi. 10, 11. John xx. 18.
13. Afterwards Jesus appeared to the other women. Matt. xxviii. 9. "As they nt to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail." This would s, in Matthew, to be immediately after they left the sepulchre the first time. t many critics observe that the words, "to tell his disciples," are wanting in many nsscripts, and of doubtful authority. It may be further said, that the words "as y were going," might have been rendered, "after they were gone." They do not ply, of necessity, that the appearance took place immediately, but only after they re gone, without specifying the time. Probably it was not long after he had appeared Mary Magdalene. They would probably return to the garden after they had ormed the disciples, and linger around there that they might ascertain what had

## MATTHEW.

become of him, or learn whether he had been seen by any one. It was probably after they had been away and returned, and after he had been seen by Mary, that they saw him.

### II. APPEARANCES OF JESUS AFTER THE RESURRECTION.

1. To Mary Magdalene. Mark xvi. 9. John xx. 14.
2. To the other women. Matt. xxviii. 9.
3. To Peter. Luke xxiv. 34. 1 Cor. xv. 5.
4. To two disciples as they were going to Emmaus. Mark xvi. 12, 13. xxiv. 13—32.
5. The same day at evening, to the apostles, in the absence of Thomas. Mark xvi. 14. Luke xxiv. 36. John xx. 19, 24. 1 Cor. xv. 5.
6. To the apostles when Thomas was present. John xx. 26—29.
7. In Galilee, at the sea of Tiberias, to Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James, John, and two others. John xxi. 1—14. This is said to be the third time he showed himself to the disciples—i. e. to the apostles—when they were assembled together. John xxi. 14.
8. To the disciples on a mountain in Galilee. Matt. xxviii. 16.
9. To more than five hundred brethren at once. 1 Cor. xv. 6.
10. To James, one of the apostles. 1 Cor. xv. 7.
11. To all the apostles assembled together. 1 Cor. xv. 7. He was seen by them forty days after he rose—probably conversing with them familiarly.
12. To the apostles at his ascension. Luke xxiv. 50, 51. Acts i. 9, 10.
13. To Paul. Acts ix. 3—5; xxii. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 8.

### III. THE ASCENSION.

1. It was forty days after his resurrection. Acts i. 3.
2. He ascended from the mount of Olives, near Bethany. Luke xxiv. Acts i. 12.
3. It was in the presence of all the apostles. Luke xxiv. 50. Acts i. 9, 10.
4. He was received into a cloud, and ascended to heaven. Luke xxiv. 51. Acts i. 9, 11. Eph. i. 20—22.

## CHARACTERISTICS

OF

## MARK'S GOSPEL.

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THIS gospel, written with the same general object, and under guidance of the same inspiration as the other evangelical narratives, would of course resemble them in its general features. It has, however, its peculiarities. That which it most resembles is the preceding gospel by Matthew; it differs, however, from it in several particulars. Matthew's gospel, as was remarked, p. 18, is an argument addressed to Jews principally. Mark's is a narrative designed chiefly for Gentiles. Mr. Barnes has remarked in the preface to this gospel, on page 353, that Mark is generally regarded as having been the companion of Peter: his gospel consists no doubt mostly of the facts in our Lord's history which that apostle dwelt upon in his ministrations. Whether Matthew's history had been read by Mark, or was used by him in preparing his own narrative, cannot now be determined. Neither of these suppositions is improbable: Mark's explanation of Jewish customs, as in ch. vii. 2—13; xii. 18; xiii. 3; xiv. 12; xv. 6, 42; and his infrequent references to Old Testament predictions, may be taken as proof that he wrote for Gentiles. He omits the genealogy of Jesus, and the sermon on the mount, both of them important in an argument with Jews; the one tracing his connexion with David according to their prophecies, and the other showing the relation between the teaching of Jesus, and the Old Testament dispensation; they were less important in a history for Gentiles, and hence, probably, the omission.

Mark also differs from Matthew in the order of time which he observes in his narrative. Matthew groups events and discourses together, with a view to his argument; distribution and consecutive order better suited Mark's purpose; and probably in that purpose, may be traced the reason why Mark relates so few of Christ's discourses, so little, in fact, of the instructions he gave, whether to his disciples or to the multitude. Events were best adapted for the vivid impression he sought to produce, as well as for the general circulation among Gentiles, which probably he anticipated.

The contents of Mark's gospel for the most part are not new. They had been exhibited, or they were touched upon, by Matthew:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL

Mark, however, exhibits them with greater minuteness, as well as with more chronological accuracy. See ch. iv. 37—41; vi. 7, 8, 13; vii. 33; viii. 23. Mark mentions numbers, dates, times, &c., with more precision than Matthew: see ch. i. 32, 35; ii. 1, 26; iv. 26, 35; v. 13, 42; vi. 2, 7, 14, 30; xi. 11, 19, 20; and some other passages. In the whole structure of his gospel he is the more graphic and lively writer. He strives rather to portray Christ's performance of the outward functions of his office, than to communicate his discourses and prove his messiahship. Or he looks at the outward, while Matthew looks at the theological. Compare, for instance, Matt. viii. 28—34, where the cure of the Gadarene demoniacs is described in general and matter-of-fact terms, with Mark v. 1—19, where the same occurrence is in the most vivid manner brought actually before us. Compare, also, Matt. xiv. 1—12, with Mark vi. 14—20. There are many other similar parallel passages.

The same desire for enlargement and explanation is also manifested in minor circumstances. Matthew, ch. ix. 18, only mentions a ruler; Mark gives both his name and office, ch. v. 22. Matthew describes Barabbas merely as a notable prisoner, ch. xxvii. 16; Mark tells us his crime, ch. xv. 7. According to Matt. xvi. 5, the disciples had forgotten to take bread with them; yet Mark says, ch. viii. 14, they had one loaf. Matthew speaks, ch. viii. 30, of a herd of many swine; Mark, ch. v. 13, of about two thousand. This peculiarity of Mark's gospel will serve to explain many apparent contradictions. Matthew speaks of two demoniacs, ch. viii. 28, and two blind men, ch. ix. 27; Mark of but one in each case, ch. v. 2, x. 46. Something peculiar in the circumstances or character of one of these persons rendered him more prominent, and led Mark to speak of him particularly. "He who narrates the greater number," says Le Clerc, "includes the smaller; he who mentions the smaller, does not deny the greater."

A few brief sections Mark has that are peculiar to himself; they are chiefly historical. See ch. iii. 8—11, 19—21; v. 18—20; vii. 32—37; viii. 22—26; xiv. 51, 52. Here and there a doctrinal section peculiar to him may be discovered; see ch. iv. 26—29; xi. 24—26; and somewhat frequently Mark's minuteness leads him to mention what other evangelists omit in incidents which they, as well as he, have given. See ch. ix. 20—25; x. 49, 50; xi. 4—6; xii. 32—34. On the whole, while Matthew's gospel is an argument, Mark's is a history. One alleges its incidents in support of certain views; the other presents them in the form of a narrative, lucid, instructive, and of the utmost value; designed for all times and for every people.

S. G.

# P R E F A C E

TO THE

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

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Mark, the writer of this gospel, little is known. He is commonly supposed to be the same that is several times mentioned in the New Testament. He was not an apostle, or companion of the Lord Jesus, in his ministry, though some of the fathers affirm that he was one of the seventy disciples. This is improbable, as he is mentioned by 1 Pet. v. 13, as his son; from which it is supposed that he was created by the instrumentality of Peter.

In the New Testament, we learn that he was sister's son to Barnabas, Col. iv. 10; and that his mother's name was Mary, a pious woman in Jerusalem, at whose house the apostles and primitive Christians assembled. Acts xii. 12.

His Hebrew name was John, Acts xii. 12, and it is probable that he chose a name better known, or more familiar, when he visited the Romans, a practice not uncommon in that age. He was at first the companion of Paul and Barnabas, in their journeys to propagate Christianity. Acts xiii. 5. He chose not to attend them through their journey, but left them in Pamphylia, and probably returned to Jerusalem. Acts xv. 38. Probably at this time he was the companion of Paul, and travelled with him to Babylon. 1 Pet. v. 13. After this he went with Barnabas to Cyprus. Acts xv. 39. Subsequently he came to Rome, at the express desire of Paul, in company with Timothy. 2 Tim. iv. 11. He remained at Rome while Paul was there, but how long is uncertain. Col. iv. 10. Philem. 24. Eusebius, Epiphanius, and Jerome, we learn that Mark went down to Alexandria in Egypt, where he planted a church, and was buried in the eighth year of the reign of Nero, 68.

The time when this gospel was written has not been ascertained. It is supposed to have been written between the years 56 and 63. It is allowed that it was written at Rome; of course, it was during the latter years of his life, after the apostles had left Judea. Mark xi. 20. He was, for a considerable time, the companion of Peter. Though

#### PREFACE TO MARK.

he had not himself been with the Saviour in his ministry, yet from his long acquaintance with Peter, he was familiar with the events of his life, and with his instructions. The uniform testimony of the fathers is, that he was the interpreter of Peter, and that he wrote this gospel under the eye of Peter, and with his approbation. So that, admitting this testimony, it has come down to us with the sanction of Peter's authority. That it was written by Mark; that it was with Peter's approbation; that it was a record of the facts which Peter stated in his ministry, or a reflex of the discourses of that apostle, and that it was therefore inspired, are matters which have never been questioned among ecclesiastical writers.

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

## CHAPTER I.

*in Baptist's office, 1—8. Jesus baptized, 9—12; is tempted, 13; preaches in Galilee, 14, 15; calls four disciples, 16—20; teaches in Capernaum, 21, 22; performs miracles, 23—34; walks alone, 35; preaches in Galilee, 36—39; cleanses a leper, 40—45.*

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the <sup>1</sup> Son of God; 2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The <sup>3</sup> voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths right.

4 John <sup>4</sup> did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance <sup>5</sup> for the remission <sup>6</sup> of sins.

5 And there went out unto him out of the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized him in the river of Jordan, confessing <sup>7</sup> their sins.

6 And John was clothed with  
Heb. i. 1, 2. <sup>3</sup> Mal. iii. 1. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xl. 3. Matt. iii. 1. Luke iii. 3. John iii. 23. <sup>4</sup> Or, bapt. <sup>5</sup> Acts xxii. 16. <sup>7</sup> Lev. xxvi. 40—42.

1. *The beginning of the gospel.* The word *gospel* literally signifies good tidings, and particularly the good tidings respecting the way of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. Some have understood the word *gospel* here to mean his history or life—the beginning of the history, &c. But Mark says nothing of the early life of the Saviour. It has reference rather to the preaching of John, an account of which immediately follows, and means the beginning of the good news, or announcement, respecting the Messiah. It is very customary thus to prefix a title to a book. ¶ *The Son of God.* This title was used here to attract attention,

and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts <sup>8</sup> and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize <sup>10</sup> you with the Holy Ghost.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized <sup>11</sup> of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens <sup>12</sup> opened, and the Spirit <sup>13</sup> like a dove descending upon him:

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom I am well pleased.

12 And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

<sup>8</sup> Lev. xi. 22. <sup>9</sup> Psa. xxxii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 13. <sup>10</sup> 1 John i. 8—10. <sup>11</sup> Matt. iii. 11. John i. 27. Acts. xlii. 25. <sup>12</sup> Joel ii. 28. Acts i. 5; ii. 4; x. 45; xi. 15, 16. <sup>13</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 13. <sup>14</sup> Matt. iii. 13. Luke iii. 21. <sup>15</sup> Or, clothes or rent. <sup>16</sup> Isa. xlii. 1. John i. 32. <sup>17</sup> Psa. ii. 7.

and secure the respect of those who should read this gospel. It is no common history. It does not recount the deeds of man, of a hero, or philosopher, but the doctrines and doings of the Son of God. The history, therefore, commands respect.

2, 3. *As it is written in the prophets.* He mentions prophets here without specifying which. The places are found in Isa. xl. 3; and in Mal. iii. 1. See Note on Matt. iii. 3.

5—8. See Note, Matt. iii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 11.

9—11. See Note, Matt. iii. 13—17.

12, 13. Mark here relates concisely what Matthew has recorded, more at



13 And <sup>1</sup> he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus <sup>2</sup> came into Galilee, preaching the gospel <sup>3</sup> of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time <sup>4</sup> is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent <sup>5</sup> ye, and believe <sup>6</sup> the gospel.

16 Now <sup>7</sup> as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv. 1, &c. Luke iv. 1, &c. <sup>2</sup> Matt. iv. 23. <sup>3</sup> Luke viii. 1. <sup>4</sup> Dan. ii. 44; ix. 25. Gal. iv. 4. Eph. i. 10. <sup>5</sup> Acts ii. 38. <sup>6</sup> Rom. xvi. 26. <sup>7</sup> Matt. iv. 18-23. Luke v. 4-11.

length in ch. iv. ¶ *The spirit driveth.* The word driveth does not mean that he was compelled forcibly against his will to go there, but that he was inclined to go there by the Spirit, or was led there. The Spirit of God, for important purposes, caused him to go. Compare Matt. ix. 25 where the same word is used in the original, "And when they were all put forth," in Greek, all driven out. ¶ *And was with the wild beasts.* This is added to show the desolation and danger of his dwelling there. In this place, surrounded by such dangers, the temptations offered by Satan were the stronger. Amidst want and perils Satan might suppose that Jesus would be more easily seduced from God. But he trusted in his Father, and was alike delivered from dangers, from the wild beasts, and from the power of temptation; thus teaching us what to do in the day of danger and trial. ¶ *And the angels ministered to him.* From Luke iv. 2, we learn that in those days he did eat nothing. When Mark says, therefore, that the angels ministered to him, it means after the days of temptation had expired, as is said by Matthew, ch. iv. 2.

14. Now after that John, &c. John was imprisoned by Herod. Matt. xiv. 3. ¶ *Jesus came into Galilee.* He left Judea, and went into the more retired country of Galilee. He supposed that if he remained

net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sab-

in Judea, Herod would also persecute him, and attempt his life. His time of death had not come; and he, therefore, prudently sought safety in retirement. Hence we may learn, that when we have great duties to perform for the church of God, we are not wantonly to endanger our lives. When we can secure them without a sacrifice of principle, we are to do it. See Matt. xxiv. 16.

15. *The time is fulfilled.* That is the time for the appearance of the Messiah. The time so long foretold has come. ¶ *The kingdom of God is at hand.* See Notes on Matt. iii. 2. ¶ *Repent ye.* Exercise sorrow for sins, and turn from them. ¶ *And believe the gospel.* Literally, trust in the gospel, or believe the good tidings, to wit, respecting salvation. See Note, Matt. iii. 2.

16—20. See Matt. iv. 18—22.

21—27. See also Luke iv. 31—37.

21. *And they went into Capernaum.* For the situation of Capernaum see Matt. iv. 13. ¶ *Straightway.* Immediately. On the following sabbath. ¶ *The synagogue.* See Note, Matt. iv. 23. ¶ *And taught.* In the synagogue, the presiding elder, after reading the scriptures, invited any who chose to address the people. Acts xiii. 15. Though our Saviour was not a priest of the Levitical order, or an officer of the synagogue, yet we find him

nth day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 And <sup>1</sup> they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And <sup>2</sup> there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let us alone; what

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii. 28.    <sup>2</sup> Luke iv. 33—36.

men availing himself of this privilege, and delivering his doctrines to the Jews.

22. *He taught them as one that had authority, &c.* See Note, Matt. vii. 29.

23. *A man with an unclean spirit.* See Matt. iv. 24. It is probable that this man had lucid intervals, or he would not have been admitted into the synagogue. While there one of his fits came on, and he suddenly cried out.

24. *Let us alone.* Though but one pure spirit is mentioned as possessing the man, yet that spirit speaks also in the name of others. They were leagued together in the work of evil, and this one saw that if he was punished others would also share the same fate. ¶ *What have we to do with thee?* This seems to mean, "Have we injured thee?" or, "We have nothing to injure thee." See 1 Kin. ii. 18. By this the spirit meant to say that if Jesus cast him out, he would use improper interference. But this was true. The possession of the man was direct assault on God and his works. Satan came to destroy the works of the evil, and he had a right, therefore, to liberate the captive, and to punish the spirit who had possessed him. So Satan still considers it an infringement of his rights, when God frees a sinner from bondage, and destroys his influence over the soul. He still pleads, to be let alone, and to be suffered to lead men captive at his will. ¶ *Art thou come to destroy us?* Implying that this could not be the intention of a benevolent Messiah; that to be cast out of that man would, in fact, be his destruction, and that, therefore, they might be suffered still to remain. Or implying, as

Matt. viii. 29, that the time of their destruction had not come, and that Jesus

have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? <sup>3</sup> art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the holy one of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 7. Exod. xiv. 11, 12. Matt. viii. 29. Jas. ii. 19.

ought not to destroy them before that. ¶ *I know thee, &c.* Evil spirits seem to have been acquainted at once with the Messiah. Besides, they had learned from his miracles that he was the Messiah, and had power over them. ¶ *The Holy One of God.* The Messiah. See Dan. ix. 24. He is called the Holy One of God, because, 1. He was eminently pure. 2. Because he was the only begotten Son of God, equal with the Father. And, 3. Because he was anointed, or set apart to the work of the Messiah, the mediator between God and man.

25. *And Jesus rebuked him.* Spoke sharply to him, or commanded him, with a threatening, to be still. It was not the man that he rebuked, but the spirit, for he instantly commanded the same being to come out of the man. In all this Jesus did not once address the man. His conversation was with the evil spirit; proving conclusively that it was not a mere disease, or derangement, for how could the Son of God hold converse with disease, or delirium, but he conversed with a being, who also conversed, reasoned, cavilled, felt, resisted, and knew him. There are therefore evil spirits; and those spirits have taken possession of men. ¶ *Hold thy peace.* Greek, "be muzzled." Restrain thyself. Cease from complaints, and come out of the man. This was a very signal proof of the power of Jesus, to be able by a word to silence an evil angel, and against his will to compel him to leave a man whom he delighted to torment.

26. *And when the unclean spirit, &c.* Still malignant, though forced to obey; submitting because he was obliged, not because he chose, he exerted his last

passion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately <sup>1</sup> the leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things <sup>2</sup> which Moses commanded, for a testimony <sup>3</sup> unto them.

45 But he went out, and began

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxiii. 9. Matt. xv. 28. John iv. 50-53; xv. 3. <sup>2</sup> Lev. xiv. 2-32. <sup>3</sup> Rom. xv. 4. 1 Cor. x. 11.

man. See Num. v. 2. The fact that Jesus touched him was evidence that the requisite power had been already put forth to heal him; that Jesus regarded him as already clean. ¶ *I will.* Here was a most manifest proof of his divine power. None but God can work a miracle. Yet Jesus does it by his own will, by an exertion of his own power. He was, therefore, divine. ¶ *See thou say nothing to any man.* The law of Moses required that the man who was healed of the leprosy should be pronounced clean by the priest, before he could be admitted again to the privileges of the congregation. Lev. xiv. Christ, though he had cleansed him, yet required him to be obedient to the law of the land; to go at once to the priest, and not to make delay by stopping to converse about his being healed. It was, also, possible that if he did not go at once, evil-minded men would go before him and prejudice the priest, and prevent his declaring the healing to be thorough, because it was done by Jesus. It was further of importance that the priest should pronounce it to be a genuine cure, that there might be no cavils among the Jews, against its being a real miracle. ¶ *Offer—those things, &c.* Two birds, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop. And after eight days, two he-lambs, without blemish, and one ewe-lamb, and fine flour, and oil. Lev. xiv. 4, 10. ¶ *For a testimony unto them.* Not to the priest, but to the

to publish it much, <sup>4</sup> and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and <sup>5</sup> they came to him from every quarter.

## CHAPTER II.

*The paralytic of Capernaum cured, 1-12. Matthew called, 13-15. Christ defends his eating with publicans, 16-22. Defends his disciples for preparing corn on the sabbath, 23-28.*

AND again he entered into Capernaum, after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

<sup>4</sup> Psa. lxxvii. 11, 12. <sup>5</sup> Ch. ii. 13.

people, that they may have evidence that it is a real cure. The testimony of the priest on the subject, would be decisive.

45. *Began to publish it much.* That is, the subject of his own cure. He was so deeply affected with it, and so much rejoiced, that he followed the natural dictates of his own feelings, rather than the command of the Saviour. ¶ *Jesus could no more enter openly into the city.* The word *could*, here, does not refer to any natural inability, or to any physical obstacle in his way, but only denotes that there was difficulty, or inconvenience, or impropriety, in his doing it then; that he judged it best not then to enter into the city. The difficulty was, probably, that his being in the city drew such crowds of people as rendered it difficult to accommodate them, or so as to excite the opposition of civil rulers. ¶ *The city.* The city, or large town, where the leper was cured. The same reason for not entering that city applied also to others, so that he remained in the deserts, where the multitudes could come to him without any difficulty or opposition.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *Into Capernaum.* See Note, Matt. iv. 13. ¶ *After some days.* The number of days is not known. Probably he remained long enough in the desert to heal the sick that were brought to him,

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, <sup>a</sup> not so much as about the door: and he preached <sup>1</sup> the word unto them.

3 And <sup>2</sup> they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, <sup>3</sup> he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xl. 9. <sup>2</sup> Matt. ix. 1—8. Luke v. 18—25. <sup>3</sup> Acts xiv. 9. Eph. ii. 8.

and to give instructions to the multitudes that attended his preaching. Capernaum was not the city mentioned in ch. i. 45, and it is probable that there was no difficulty in his remaining there and preaching. ¶ And it was noised, &c. He entered the city, doubtless, privately; but his being there was soon known, and so great had his popularity become that multitudes pressed to hear him.

2. So much as about the door. In the court or yard before the door. They could not get near enough to hear him. ¶ Preached the word unto them. The word of God; the revelation or doctrine which he came to deliver, called the word; and the word of God, because it was spoken or revealed by God. Compare Acts vi. 2, 7.

3—12. See this miracle explained in Matt. ix. 2—8. ¶ Palsy. See Note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ Borne of four. Borne on a couch, Matt. ix. 2, by four men.

4. The press. The crowd, the multitude of people. Jesus was, probably, in the large open area, or hall, in the centre of the house. See Note, Matt. ix. 1—8. The people pressed into that area, and blocked up the door so that they could not have access to him. ¶ They un-

7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins <sup>4</sup> but God only?

8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power <sup>5</sup> on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy.)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth

<sup>4</sup> Isa. xlii. 25. Dan. ix. 9. <sup>5</sup> Acts v. 31.

covered the roof where he was. See Note, Matt. ix. 2—8. Houses were flat. In cities they joined each other, and the roofs constituted an agreeable place for walking. It is not improbable that they ascended a neighbouring house, and came over the hall, above where Jesus stood. They removed the curtain or awning, drawn over the area, where Jesus was, so that they might let the man down before him. ¶ When they had broken it up. When they had removed the awning, and a part of the banisters, so that they could let the man down.

5. Their faith. Their confidence, or belief, that he could heal him. ¶ Son. Literally, child. The Hebrews used the words son and child with a great latitude of signification. They were applied to children, to grandchildren, to adopted children, to any descendants, to disciples, followers, young people, and to dependents. See Note, Matt. i. 1. In this place, it denotes affection, or kindness. It was a word of consolation; an endearing appellation, applied by the Saviour to the sick man, to show his compassion, to inspire confidence, and to assure him that he would heal him.

12. We never saw it on this fashion.

*Withered hand cured.*

MARK.

A.D. 31.

sabbath was made for man,<sup>1</sup> and not <sup>a</sup> man for the sabbath :

28 Therefore <sup>b</sup> the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

### CHAPTER III.

*The withered hand cured, 1—5. Christ gets away from the Pharisees, 6—12; Selects the twelve, 13—21. The Pharisees' cavil, 22—30. Christ's mother and brethren, 31—35.*

AND <sup>c</sup> he entered again into the synagogue ; and there was a

<sup>1</sup> Neh. ix. 14. Isa. lviii. 13. Ezech. xx. 12. 20. <sup>2</sup> Col. ii. 16. <sup>3</sup> John ix. 14. Eph. i. 22. Rev. i. 10. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xii. 9—13. Luke vi. 6—10.

For his rest from toil, his rest from the cares and anxieties of the world, to give an opportunity to call off his attention from earthly concerns, and to direct it to the affairs of eternity. It was a kind provision for man that he might refresh his body by relaxing his labours ; that he might have undisturbed time to seek the consolations of religion to cheer him in the anxieties and sorrows of a troubled world ; and that he might render to God that homage which is most justly due to him as the Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and Redeemer of the world. And it is easily capable of proof, that no institution has been more signally blessed to man's welfare than the Christian sabbath. To that we owe, more than to anything else, the peace and order of a civilized community. Where there is no sabbath, there are ignorance, vice, disorder, and crime. On that holy day, the poor and the ignorant, as well as the learned, have undisturbed time to learn the requirements of religion, the nature of morals, the law of God, and the way of salvation. On that day man may offer his praises to the great Giver of all good, and in the sanctuary seek the blessing of Him whose favour is life. Where that day is observed in any manner as it should be, order prevails, morals are promoted, the poor are elevated in their condition, vice flies away, and the community puts on the appearance of neatness, industry, morality, and religion. The sabbath was, therefore, pre-eminently intended for man's welfare, and the best interests of mankind demand that it should be *accredited* regarded as an appointment of

man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched <sup>d</sup> him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day ; that they might accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, <sup>e</sup> Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil ? to save life, <sup>f</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Luke xiv. 1. <sup>6</sup> *Arie, in the midst.* <sup>7</sup> Hos. vi. 6.

merciful Heaven, intended for our highest good ; and, where improved aright, infallibly resulting in our temporal and eternal peace. ¶ *Not man for the sabbath.* Man was made first, and then the sabbath was appointed for his welfare. Gen. ii. 2. The sabbath was not first made or contemplated, and then the man made with reference to that. Since, therefore, the sabbath was intended for man's real good, the law respecting it must not be interpreted so as to oppose his real welfare. It must be explained in consistency with a proper attention to the duties of mercy to the poor and the sick, and to those in peril. It must be, however, in accordance with man's real good on the whole, and with the law of God. The law of God contemplates man's real good on the whole ; and we have no right under the plea that the sabbath was made for man, to do anything contrary to what the law of God admits. It would not be for our real good, but for our real and eternal injury, to devote the sabbath to vice, to labour, or to amusement.

28. *Therefore, the Son of man, &c.* See Note, Matt. xii. 8.

### CHAPTER III.

1—5. See this explained in Matt. xii. 9—13.

4. *Or to do evil ? to save life, or to kill ?* It seems to have been a maxim with the Jews, that not to do good when we have an opportunity, was to do evil ; not to save life was to kill, or to be guilty of murder. If a man has an opportunity of saving another's life when he is in danger, and does not do it, he is evidently

or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness<sup>1</sup> of their

<sup>1</sup> Or, blindness.

guilty of his death. On this principle our Saviour puts this question to the Jews, whether it was better for him, having the power to heal this man, to do it, or to suffer him to remain in this suffering condition. And he employs for illustration an example, in a matter of much less importance, that respecting their cattle, they would do on the sabbath just as he would if he should heal this man. The same remark may apply to all opportunities of doing good. "The ability to do good imposes an obligation to do it."—*Cotton Mather*. He that has the means of feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked, and instructing the ignorant, and sending the gospel to the destitute, and that does it not, is guilty; for he is practically doing evil; he is suffering evils to exist which he might remove. So the wicked will be condemned in the day of judgment, because "they did it not." Matt. xxv. 45. If this be true, what an obligation rests on the rich to do good!

5. *With anger*. With a severe and stern countenance; with indignation at their hypocrisy and hardness of heart. This was not, however, a spiteful or revengeful passion; it was caused by excessive grief at their state. It was not sudden and tumultuous hatred of the men whose hearts were so hard; it was hatred of the sin which they exhibited, joined with extreme grief that neither his teaching, nor the law of God, nor any means which could be used, overcame their confirmed wickedness. Such anger is not unlawful. Eph. iv. 26. And in this instance, our Lord has taught us that anger is never lawful, except when it is tempered with grief or compassion for those who have offended. ¶ *Hardness of their hearts*. The heart, figuratively the seat of feeling, or affection, is said to be tender when it is easily affected by the sufferings of others; by our own sin and danger; by the love and commands of God; when we are easily made to feel on

hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand.\* And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

6 And the Pharisees went forth,

\* 1 Kin. xiii. 6. John v. 8, 9.

the great subjects pertaining to our interest. Ezek. xi. 19, 20. It is hard, when nothing moves it; when a man is alike insensible to the sufferings of others, the dangers of his own condition, and the commands, the love, and the threatenings of God. It is most tender in youth, or when we have committed fewest crimes. It is made hard by indulgence in sin; by long resisting the offers of life; or by opposing any great and affecting appeals which God may make to us by his Spirit, or providence, by affliction, or by a revival of religion. Hence it is, that the most favourable period for securing an interest in Christ, or for becoming a Christian, is in youth; the first, the tenderest, and the best days of life. Nay, in the days of childhood, in the sabbath school, God may be found, and the soul prepared for removal to a better world.

6. *Straightway*. Immediately; or as soon as possible. ¶ *Took counsel*. Laid a plan. Consulted with them. Literally, *made a consultation*. ¶ *The Herodians*. See Note, Matt. xxii. 16. ¶ *How they might destroy him*. They hated him for his holiness, because he reproved them, because he laid open their hypocrisy, and because he won the hearts of the people, and lessened their influence. They, therefore, determined to remove him, if possible, and thus avoid his reproofs. Sinners would often rather put to death the man that reproves them, than forsake their sins. The Pharisees had rather commit any crime, even to the murder of the Messiah, than forsake the sins for which he rebuked them.

7, 8. *To the sea*. The sea of Galilee. Or to the desert and lonely regions which surrounded the sea, where he might be in obscurity, and avoid their designs against his life. His time had not yet come, and he prudently took care of his life, thus showing that we are not needlessly to throw ourselves into danger. ¶ *Galilee*. See Matt. ii. 22. ¶ *Judea*. See Matt. ii. 1. ¶ *Jerusalem*. Jerusalem was in

and straightway took counsel with the <sup>1</sup> Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great <sup>2</sup> multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cix. 2, 3. Matt. xxii. 16. <sup>2</sup> Luke vi. 17.

Judea. It is mentioned particularly to show that not only the people of the surrounding country came, but also many from the capital, the place of wealth and honour, and power. ¶ *Idumæa*. The country formerly inhabited by the Edomites, in the time of the Saviour, the most southern part of the land of Canaan. The word *Idumæa* is a Greek word, made from the Hebrew Edom. It signifies the land of Edom, a name given to Esau, one of the sons of Isaac. Gen. xxv. 30. The word signifies red, and was given to him because he sought of Jacob red pottage, as the price of his birthright. He settled in Mount Seir, Deut. ii. 5, on the south of the land of Canaan, and the country of Idumæa was bounded by Palestine on the north. During the Babylonish captivity, the Edomites spread themselves into the country of Judea, and occupied a considerable part of the south of Palestine. They had, however, submitted to the rite of circumcision, and were incorporated with the Jews. From them sprang Herod the Great. ¶ *From beyond Jordan*. From the east coast of the river Jordan. The sacred writers lived on the west side of Jordan, and by the country *beyond Jordan*, they meant that on the east side. ¶ *Tyre and Sidon*. See Note, Matt. xi. 21.

9. *A small ship*. Rather, a boat. There were, properly speaking, no ships on the sea of Tiberias. This was probably a small boat that belonged to his disciples, in which he could sit off from the shore, and teach the people without being

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many; <sup>3</sup> insomuch that they <sup>4</sup> pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 And <sup>5</sup> unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12 And he straitly charged them

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xli. 15; xiv. 14. <sup>4</sup> Gr. *rushed*. <sup>5</sup> Ch. i. 24. Matt. xiv. 33. Luke iv. 41. Jas. ii. 19.

pressed by them. ¶ *Lest they should throng him*. They pressed upon him in great numbers. He had healed many, and those who were still diseased pressed or crowded on him so as to endanger his life. He, therefore, withdrew from the multitude, and sought a situation where he might be free from danger. ¶ *As many as had plagues*. As many as had diseases, or maladies of body or mind. The word *plague*, now confined to a particular disease, does not express the meaning of the original, and tends to mislead.

11, 12. *Unclean spirits*. Persons who were possessed of evil spirits. ¶ *Thou art the Son of God*. The Son of God, by way of eminence. In this place, it is equivalent to the Messiah, who, among the Jews, was called the Son of God. Hence they were charged not to make him known, because he was not desirous that it should be blazoned abroad that he claimed to be the Messiah. He had not yet done what he wished to establish his claims to the Messiahship; he was poor and unhonoured, and the claim would be treated as that of an impostor, as it was afterwards, and would endanger his life. For the present, therefore, he did not wish that it should be proclaimed abroad that he was the Messiah.

This circumstance proves the existence of evil spirits. If these were merely diseased or deranged persons, then it is strange that they should be endowed with knowledge so much superior to those in health. If these persons were under the

that they should not make him known.<sup>1</sup>

13 And <sup>2</sup> he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him* whom he <sup>3</sup> would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16 And Simon <sup>4</sup> he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James;

and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: <sup>5</sup>

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went <sup>6</sup> into an house.

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so <sup>7</sup> that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when his <sup>8</sup> friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 25, 34. <sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 1. <sup>3</sup> John xv. 16. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xvi. 16—18. John i. 42. <sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. i. 1.

<sup>6</sup> 1st. 1viii. 1. Jer. xxviii. 29. Heb. iv. 12, 13. <sup>7</sup> Or, home. <sup>8</sup> Ch. vi. 31. Or, kinsmen. Ver. 31. John vii. 3—10.

influence of an order of spirits superior to man whose appropriate habitation was in another world, then it is not strange that they should know him, even in the midst of his poverty, to be the Messiah, the Son of God.

13—19. For an account of the appointment of the apostles, see Matt. x. 1—4. ¶ And calleth *unto him whom he would*. Those whom he chose, whom he was about to appoint to the apostleship.

14. *He ordained twelve*. The word rendered *ordained* here, does not express our notion of ordination to the ministry. It means, literally, he made, or he appointed twelve to be with him. ¶ *Twelve*. The reason why twelve were chosen was, probably, that such a number would be deemed competent witnesses of what they saw, that so many could not be supposed to be imposed upon, that they could not be easily charged with being excited by sympathy, or being deluded as a multitude might, and that, being destined to go into all the world, a considerable number seemed indispensable. Perhaps, also, there was some reference to the fact that twelve was the number of the tribes of Israel.

17. *Boanerges*. This word is made up of two Hebrew words, signifying sons of thunder, meaning that they on some accounts resembled thunder. Note, Matt. i. 1. It is not known why this name was given to James and John. They are no

where else called by it. Some suppose it was because they wished to call down fire from heaven, and consume a certain village of the Samaritans. Luke ix. 54. It is, however, more probable that it was on account of something fervid, and glowing, and powerful in their genius and eloquence.

20. *They could not so much as eat bread*. Their time and attention were so occupied, that they were obliged to forego their regular meals. The affairs of religion may so occupy the attention of ministers, and others, as to destroy their relish for the ordinary comforts and employments of life, and prevent their engaging in their customary pursuits. Religion is all important, far more important than the ordinary business of this life; and there is nothing unreasonable if our temporal affairs sometimes give way to the higher interests of our own souls, and the souls of others. At the same time, it is true that religion is ordinarily consistent with a close attention to worldly business. It promotes industry, economy, order, neatness, and punctuality, all indispensable to worldly prosperity. Of these there has been no more illustrious example than that of our Saviour himself.

21. *When his friends*. Greek, they who were of him. Not the apostles, but his relatives, his friends, who were in the place of his nativity. ¶ *Heard of it*. Heard of his conduct, his preaching, his



him: for they said, He <sup>1</sup> is beside himself.

22 ¶ And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He <sup>2</sup> hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.<sup>3</sup>

25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

<sup>1</sup> Hos. ix. 7. John x. 20. <sup>2</sup> Matt. ix. 34; x. 25; xii. 24. Luke xi. 15. John vii. 20; viii. 8, 52. <sup>3</sup> Judg. ix. 23—57; xii. 1—6. <sup>1</sup> Kin. xii. 16—20.

appointing the apostles, his drawing such a multitude to his preaching. This shows that by his friends the apostles were not meant, but those at a distance who heard of his conduct. ¶ *They went out to lay hold on him.* To take him away from the multitude, and to remove him to his home, that he might be treated as a maniac, and, by absence from the causes of excitement, might be restored to his right mind. ¶ *They said.* That is, common report said; or, his friends said, for they did not believe on him. John vii. 5. Probably the enemies of Jesus raised the report, and his relatives were persuaded to believe it to be true. ¶ *He is beside himself.* He is delirious, or deranged. The reason why this report gained any belief was, probably, that our Lord had lived among them as a carpenter; that he was poor, and unknown; and that now, at thirty years of age, he broke off from his occupations, abandoned his common employment, spent much time in the deserts, denied himself the common comforts of life, and set up his claim to be the Messiah who was expected by all the people to come with great pomp and splendour. The charge of derangement on account of attention to religion, has not been confined to our Saviour. Let a man be made deeply sensible of his sins, and spend

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 No <sup>4</sup> man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28 Verily I say unto you, All <sup>5</sup> sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost <sup>6</sup> hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. xlix. 24, 26; lxi. 1. Matt. xii. 29. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xii. 31. Luke xii. 10. <sup>6</sup> Heb. x. 29.

much of his time in prayer, and have no relish for the ordinary amusements or business of life; or let a Christian be much impressed with his obligation to devote himself to God, and act as if he believed there was an eternity, and warn his neighbours of their danger; or let a minister show uncommon zeal, and waste his strength in the service of his Master, and the world is not slow to call it derangement. And none will be more ready to originate or believe the charge than an ungodly and infidel parent, or brother, a self-righteous Pharisee or professor in the church. At the same time, men may endanger themselves on the bosom of the deep, or in the bowels of the earth, for wealth; or may plunge into the vortex of fashion, and folly, and vice, and break in upon the hours of repose, and neglect their duties to their family, and the demands of business, and in the view of the world it is wisdom, and proof of a sane mind! Such is the consistency of boasted reason; such the wisdom and prudence of worldly men!

22—30. *And the scribes, &c.* See Notes on Matt. xii. 24—32. The occasion of their saying this was, that he had healed a man possessed with a devil. The scribes, who came from Jerusalem to watch his conduct, charged it on a compact or agree-

31 ¶ There <sup>1</sup> came then his brethren and his mother, and, finding without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

34 And he looked round about him, and he said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

35 For whosoever shall do <sup>2</sup> the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Parable of the sower, 1—13; explained, 15—20. Light not to be hid, 21—25. Seed secretly growing, 26—29. Parable of the mustard seed, 30—34. Storm on the lake hushed, 35—41.*

AND <sup>3</sup> he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables, <sup>4</sup> and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken; <sup>5</sup> Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4 And it came to pass, as he <sup>6</sup> sowed, some fell by the way side, and the <sup>7</sup> fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony <sup>8</sup> ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and <sup>9</sup> because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, <sup>10</sup> and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good <sup>11</sup> ground, and did yield fruit <sup>12</sup> that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And <sup>13</sup> when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto <sup>14</sup> you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, <sup>15</sup> all these things are done in parables:

12 That <sup>16</sup> seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

<sup>17</sup> Gen. xv. 11. <sup>18</sup> Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26. <sup>19</sup> Psa. i. 4. <sup>20</sup> Jas. i. 11. <sup>21</sup> Jer. iv. 3. <sup>22</sup> Heb. vi. 7, 8. <sup>23</sup> Col. i. 6. <sup>24</sup> Matt. xiii. 10—17. <sup>25</sup> Eph. i. 9. <sup>26</sup> Col. iv. 5. <sup>27</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 12. <sup>28</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 7. <sup>29</sup> Isa. vi. 9, 10. John xii. 40. Acts xxviii. 26, 27. Rom. xi. 8.

rest between him and the prince of the world.

31—35. See Notes on Matt. xii. 46—50.

## CHAPTER IV.

1—9. See the parable of the sower examined, in the Notes on Matt. xiii. 1—9. 10—13. See Matt. xiii. 10—17. On

ver. 12, see particularly Notes on John xii. 39, 40. *When he was alone.* That is, separate from the multitude. When he withdrew from the multitude, a few followed him for the purpose of further instruction.

13. *Know ye not this parable?* This which is so plain and obvious. ¶ *How*

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 ¶ The sower<sup>1</sup> soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh<sup>2</sup> immediately, and taketh away<sup>3</sup> the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root<sup>4</sup> in themselves, and so endure but<sup>5</sup> for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the world's sake, immediately<sup>6</sup> they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the<sup>7</sup> cares of this world, and the deceitfulness<sup>8</sup> of riches,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxxii. 20. <sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. i. 25. <sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. v. 8. Rev. xii. 9. <sup>4</sup> Heb. ii. 1. <sup>5</sup> Job. xix. 25. <sup>6</sup> Job xxvii. 10. <sup>7</sup> 2 Tim. i. 15. <sup>8</sup> Luke xiv. 18—20. <sup>9</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 9, 17. <sup>10</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 10. <sup>11</sup> Prov. xxiii. 5.

*will ye know all parables?* Those which are more difficult and obscure. As they were themselves to be teachers, it was important that they should be acquainted with the whole system of religion; of much more importance for them at that time, than for the mass of the people.

14—20. See Matt. xiii. 18—23.

21. *Is a candle brought, &c.* A candle is not lit up to be put immediately under a measure, or a bed, where it can give no light. Its design is to give light. So my preaching by parables is not designed to obscure the truth, but to throw light on it. You should understand those parables, and, understanding them, should impart the truth to others also, as a candle throws its beams upon a dark world. ¶ *Bushel.* In the original a measure for grain, containing about twelve quarts. ¶ *Bed.* A couch, either to sleep on at night, or to recline on at their meals. Probably the

and the<sup>9</sup> lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.<sup>10</sup>

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit,<sup>11</sup> some thirty fold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

21 ¶ And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a<sup>12</sup> bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22 For<sup>13</sup> there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he saith unto them, Take heed what<sup>14</sup> ye hear: with<sup>15</sup> what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath

<sup>9</sup> 1 John ii. 16, 17. <sup>10</sup> Isa. v. 2, 4. <sup>11</sup> Rom. vii. 4. Col. i. 10. <sup>12</sup> 2 Pet. i. 8. <sup>13</sup> See on Matt. v. 15. <sup>14</sup> Ecc. xii. 14. Matt. x. 26. Luke xii. 2. 1 Cor. iv. 5. <sup>15</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 2. <sup>16</sup> Matt. vii. 2.

latter is here meant, and it is equivalent to our saying, a candle is not brought to be put under the table, but on it. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6.

22. *There is nothing hid, &c.* See Note, Matt. x. 26.

24. *Take heed what ye hear.* Or, consider well what you hear. Make a good improvement of it. ¶ *With what measure ye mete, &c.* You shall be treated according to the use you make of your opportunities of learning. If you consider well, and make a good improvement of what you hear, you shall be well rewarded. If not, your reward shall be small. This is a proverbial expression. See it explained on Matt. vii. 1, 2. ¶ *Mete.* Measure. With what measure ye measure. ¶ *Unto you that hear.* To you who are attentive, and who improve what you hear.

25. For he that hath, &c. See Note

not, from <sup>1</sup> him shall be taken even that which he hath.

26 ¶ And he said, So <sup>2</sup> is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground ;

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should

<sup>1</sup> Luke viii. 18. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii. 24.

Matt. xiii. 12. The meaning here seems to be, he that diligently attends to my words, shall increase more and more in the knowledge of the truth. But he that neglects them, and is inattentive, shall become more ignorant ; the few things which he had learned he will forget, and his trifling knowledge will be diminished. ¶ *Hath not.* Does not improve what he possessed ; or does not make proper use of his means of learning. ¶ *That which he hath.* That which he had already learned. By this we are taught the indispensable necessity of giving attention to the means of instruction. The attention must be continued. It is not sufficient that we have learned some things, or appear to have learned much. All will be in vain, unless we go forward, and improve every opportunity of learning the will of God and the way of salvation. So what children are taught will be of little use unless they follow it up, and endeavour to improve themselves.

26. *So is the kingdom of God.* The gospel, or religion in the soul, may be compared to this. See Matt. iii. 2.

27. *And should sleep, and rise night and day.* Should sleep in the night, and rise by day, for so the expression is to be understood. That is, should live in his usual way, without exerting any influence over the growing grain. By this we are not to infer that men are to use no diligence in the attainment and growth of piety, but the illustration shows this, and this only, that as we cannot tell how grain grows, so we cannot tell the mode in which piety increases in the heart. ¶ *He knoweth not how.* This is still true. After all the researches of philosophers, not one has been able to tell the way in which grain grows. They can observe one fact after another ; they can see the changes ; they can see the necessity of rains and suns, of care and shelter, but beyond this they cannot go. So in religion.

spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. <sup>3</sup>

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself ; <sup>4</sup> first <sup>5</sup> the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

<sup>3</sup> Ecc. xi. 6. John iii. 7, 8. 1 Cor. xv. 37, 38. <sup>4</sup> Gen. i. 11, 12. <sup>5</sup> Ecc. iii. 1, 11.

We can mark the change ; we can see the need of prayer, and examination, and searching the scriptures, and the ordinances of religion, but we cannot tell in what way the religious principle is strengthened. As God unseen, yet by the use of proper means, makes the grass to flourish, so God, unseen, but by proper means, nourishes the soul, and the plants of piety spring up, and bloom, and bear fruit. See John iii. 8.

28. *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.* That is, it is done without the power of man. It is done while man is engaged in other things. The scope of the place does not require us to suppose that our Saviour meant to say that the earth had any productive power of itself, but only that it produced its fruits not by the power of man. God gives it its power. It has no power of its own. So religion in the heart is not by the power of man. It grows he cannot tell how ; and of course he cannot, without divine aid, control it. It is by the power of God. At the same time, as without industry man would have no harvest, so without active effort he would have no religion. Both are connected with his effort ; both are to be measured commonly by his effort, Phil. ii. 12 ; both grow he cannot tell how ; both increase when the proper means are used ; and both depend on God for increase. ¶ *First the blade.* The green, tender shoot, that first starts out of the earth, before the stalk is formed. ¶ *Then the ear.* The original means the stalk or spire of wheat or barley, as well as the ear. ¶ *The full corn.* The ripe wheat. The grain swollen to its proper size. By this is denoted, undoubtedly, that grace or religion in the heart is of gradual growth. It is at first tender, feeble, perhaps almost imperceptible, like the first shootings of the grain in the earth. Perhaps also, like grain, it often lies long in the earth before there are signs of life. Like the tender grain, also, it needs care, kindness, and

29 But when the fruit is<sup>1</sup> brought forth, immediately he<sup>2</sup> putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 ¶ And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 *It*<sup>3</sup> is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the

<sup>1</sup> Or, ripe. Job v. 26. <sup>2</sup> Rev. xiv. 15. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xiii. 31, 32. Luke xiii. 18, 19.

culture. A light frost, a cold storm, or a burning sun, alike injure it. So tender piety, in the heart of a child, needs care, kindness, culture. It needs shelter from the frosts and storms of a cold, unfeeling world. It needs the genial dews and mild suns of heaven; in other words, it needs instruction, prayer, and friendly counsel from parents, teachers, ministers, and experienced Christians, that it may grow, and bring forth the full fruits of holiness. Like the grain also, in due time, it will grow strong; it will produce its appropriate fruit, a full and rich harvest, to the praise of God.

29. *Immediately he putteth in the sickle.* This is the way with the husbandman. As soon as the grain is ripe, it is cut down. So it is often with the Christian. As soon as he is prepared for heaven, he is taken there. But we are not to press this part of the parable, as if it meant that all are removed as soon as they are fit for heaven. Every parable contains circumstances thrown in to fill up the story, which cannot be literally interpreted. In this, the circumstance of sleeping and rising cannot be applied to Christ; and in like manner, the harvest, I suppose, is not to be literally interpreted. Perhaps the whole parable may be differently interpreted. The seed sown may mean the gospel which he was preaching. In Judea its beginnings were small. Yet he would leave it, commit it to his disciples, and return to his Father. The gospel in the mean time, left by him, would take root, spring up, and produce an abundant harvest. In due time he would return, send forth the angels, and gather in the harvest, and save his people for ever.

30. *Whereunto shall we liken, &c.*

earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater<sup>4</sup> than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them as<sup>5</sup> they were able to hear it.

<sup>4</sup> Prov. iv. 18. Isa. xl. 2. Dan. ii. 44. Mal. i. 11. <sup>5</sup> John. xvi. 12. 1 Cor. iiii. 1, 2. Heb. v. 11—14.

This shows the great solicitude which Jesus had to adapt his instructions to the capacity of his disciples. He sought out the most plain and striking illustrations, an example which should be followed by all the ministers of the gospel. At the same time that the instructions of the pulpit should be dignified, as our Saviour's always were, they should be plain, adapted to the capacity of the audience, and easily understood. To do this, the following things are necessary in a minister: 1. Humility. A freedom from a desire to shine, and astonish the world by the splendour of his talents, and by his learning and eloquence. 2. Good sense. A satisfaction in being understood. 3. Acquaintance with the habits of thought and manner of speaking among the people. To do this, frequent intercourse with them is necessary. 4. A good sound education. It is the men of ignorance with some smattering of learning, and with a desire to confound and astonish men by the use of unintelligible words, and by the introduction of matter that is wholly unconnected with the subject, that most often shoot over the heads of the people. Preachers of humility, good sense, and education, are content with being understood, and free from the affectation of saying things to amaze and confound their auditors. ¶ *The kingdom of God.* See Note, Matt. iii. 2.

31, 32. See Notes on Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

33. *Spake the word.* The word of God. The doctrines of his gospel. ¶ *As they were able to hear it.* As they could comprehend it. They were like children; and he was obliged to lead them along cautiously, and by degrees, to a full understanding of the plan of salvation.

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them : and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship : and there were also with him other little ships.

37 And <sup>1</sup> there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow : and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, <sup>2</sup> carest thou not that we perish ?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And <sup>3</sup> the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why

<sup>1</sup> Matt. viii. 23. Luke viii. 22. <sup>2</sup> Ps. x. 1. Lam. xl. 27. Lam. iii. 8. <sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxxix. 3. Lam. iii. 31, 32.

34. *Without a parable spake he not unto them.* That is, the things pertaining to his kingdom. On other subjects he spake without parables. On these, such was their prejudice, so many notions had they contrary to the nature of his kingdom, and so liable would plain instructions have been to give offence, that he employed this method to insinuate truth gradually into their minds, and to prepare them fully to understand the nature of his kingdom. ¶ *They were alone.* His disciples. ¶ *He expounded.* Explained. Showed them more at length the spiritual meaning of the parables.

35—41. See Matt. viii. 18—27.

36. *Even as he was in the ship.* They took him without making any preparation for the voyage, without providing any bed or raiment. He was sitting in a ship or boat, instructing the people. In the same boat, probably ill fitted to encounter a storm on the lake, they sailed. This would render their danger more

are ye so fearful ? <sup>4</sup> how is it that ye have no faith ?

41 And they feared <sup>5</sup> exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea <sup>6</sup> obey him ?

## CHAPTER V

*The legion cast out, 1—10. The swine destroyed, 11—14. The demoniac publishes his cure, 15—20. The woman's issue cured, 21—34. The daughter of Jairus raised, 35—43.*

AND <sup>7</sup> they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 Who had *his dwelling* <sup>8</sup> among the tombs ; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains :

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asun-

<sup>4</sup> Ps. xlv. 1. 2. Isa. xliii. 2. <sup>5</sup> John i. 10, 16. <sup>6</sup> Job xxxviii. 11. <sup>7</sup> Matt. viii. 28—34. Luke viii. 26—36. <sup>8</sup> Isa. lxx. 4.

imminent, and the miracle more striking. ¶ *There were with him other little ships.* Belonging probably to the people, who, seeing him sail, resolved to follow him.

39. *Peace, be still.* There is something exceedingly authoritative and majestic in this command of our Lord. Standing amidst the howling tempest, on the heaving sea, and in the darkness of the night, by his own power he stills the waves, and bids the storm subside. None but the God of the storms and the billows could awe, by a word, the troubled elements, and send a universal peace and stillness among the winds and waves. He must, therefore, be divine.

## CHAPTER V.

1—20. See this account of the demoniacs fully explained on Matt. viii. 28—34.

4. *He had been often bound with fetters and chains.* Efforts had been made to confine him, but his great strength, his

der by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped <sup>1</sup> him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8 For he said unto him, Come <sup>2</sup> out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.

9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: <sup>3</sup> for we are many.

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine <sup>4</sup> feeding.

12 And all the devils besought <sup>5</sup> him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxii. 9. <sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 18. Heb. ii. 14. 1 John. iii. 8. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xii. 45. Lev. xi. 7, 8. Deut. xiv. 8. <sup>4</sup> Job i. 10, 12; ii. 5, 6. <sup>5</sup> Rev. xlii. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

strength increased by his malady, had prevented it.

5. *Cutting himself with stones.* These are all marks of a madman, a man bereft of reason, wretched, an outcast, strong and dangerous. The inspired penman says that this madness was caused by an unclean spirit, or by his being under the influence of a devil. That this account is not irrational, see Note on Matt. iv. 24.

6. *Worshipped him.* Bowed down before him; rendered him homage. This was an acknowledgment of his power, and his control over fallen spirits.

9. *My name is Legion.* See Notes on Matt. viii. 29.

them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and <sup>7</sup> had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.<sup>8</sup>

16 And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

17 And they began to pray him to depart <sup>9</sup> out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and <sup>10</sup> tell them how great things the Lord hath done

<sup>7</sup> Isa. xlix. 25. Col. i. 13. <sup>8</sup> Job xlii. 11. Psa. xlv. 5. 2 Tim. i. 7. <sup>9</sup> Job xxi. 14. Luke v. 8. Acts xvi. 39. <sup>10</sup> Deut. xxvi. 5-8. Psa. lxxvi. 16. Isa. xxxviii. 19.

15. *Sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind.* There could be no doubt of the reality of this miracle. The man had been well known. He had long dwelt among the tombs, an object of terror and alarm. To see him all at once peaceful, and calm, and rational, was proof that it was the power of God only that had done it. ¶ *They were afraid.* They were awed, as in the presence of God. The word does not mean here that they feared that any evil would happen to them, but that they were affected with awe; they felt that God was there; they were struck with astonishment at what Jesus had done.

19. *Jesus suffered him not.* Various

for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him : and all *men* did marvel.

21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him : and he was nigh unto the sea.

22 And, <sup>1</sup> behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name ; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point <sup>2</sup> of death : *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed ; and she shall live.

24 And Jesus went with him ; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 And a certain woman, which had an issue <sup>3</sup> of blood twelve years,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 18—26. Luke viii. 41—56. <sup>2</sup> Psal. cxli. 18. <sup>3</sup> Lev. xv. 19—23.

reasons have been conjectured why Jesus did not suffer this man to go with him. It might be, that he wished to leave him among the people, as a conclusive evidence of his power to work miracles. It might be that the man feared that if Jesus left him the devils would return, and that Jesus told him to remain to show to him that the cure was complete, and that he had power over the devils when absent as well as when present. But the probable reason is, that he desired to restore him to his family and friends. He was probably a man of influence, and Jesus was unwilling to delay the joy of his friends, and prolong their anxiety, by suffering him to remain away from them.

20. *In Decapolis.* See Note, Matt. iv.

25. *How great things, &c.* This was the natural expression of right feeling at being cured of such a calamity. So the desire of sinners freed from sin is to honour Jesus, to ascribe all to his power, and to invite the world to participate in the same

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing <sup>4</sup> bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched <sup>5</sup> his garment.

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up ; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue <sup>6</sup> had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes ?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me ?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

<sup>4</sup> Job. xlii. 4. Psal. cxlii. 12. Jer. xxx. 12, 13. <sup>5</sup> 2 Kin. xiii. 21. Matt. xiv. 36. Acts v. 15 ; xix. 12. <sup>6</sup> Luke vi. 19.

salvation, and to join them in doing honour to the Son of God. Compare Psal. lxxvi. 16.

22—43. See the account of the raising of Jairus' daughter, and the healing of the woman with an issue of blood fully explained in Notes on Matt. ix. 18—26.

23. *Lieth at the point of death.* Is dying, in the last agonies.

26. *Had suffered many things.* Had resorted to many things painful, by the direction of the physicians, in order to be healed.

27. *Came in the press behind.* In the crowd that pressed upon him. This was done to avoid being noticed. It was an act of faith. She was full of confidence that Jesus was able to heal, but she trembled on account of her conscious unworthiness, thus illustrating the humility and confidence of a sinner coming to God for pardon and life.

30. *Virtue had gone out of him.* Power to heal. The word in the original



33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told <sup>1</sup> him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith <sup>2</sup> hath made thee whole; go <sup>3</sup> in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: <sup>4</sup> why troublest thou the Master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only <sup>5</sup> believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save <sup>6</sup> Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxx. 2. <sup>2</sup> Ch. x. 52. Acts xiv. 2. <sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. i. 17; xx. 42. <sup>4</sup> John v. 25; xi. 25. <sup>5</sup> 2 Chron. xx. 20. John xi. 40. <sup>6</sup> Ch. ix. 2; xiv. 33.

means power. ¶ *Who touched my clothes?* This he said, not to obtain information, for he had healed her, and must have known on whom the blessing was conferred; but he did it, that the woman might herself make a confession of the whole matter, by which the power of her faith and the greatness of the miracle might be manifested to the praise of God.

34. *Daughter.* A word of kindness, tending to inspire confidence, and to dissipate her fears. ¶ *Be whole.* That is, continue to be whole; for she was already cured. ¶ *Of thy plague.* Thy disease; literally thy scourge. So a word from Jesus heals the moral malady of the sinner.

35, 36. *Why troublest thou, &c.* It seems that the people had not yet confidence that Jesus could raise the dead. He had not yet done it; and as the child was now dead, and as they supposed that his power over her was at an end, they

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. <sup>7</sup>

40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, TALITHA CUMI; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. <sup>8</sup>

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And he charged <sup>9</sup> them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

<sup>7</sup> John xi. 11—13. <sup>8</sup> Acts ix. 40. <sup>9</sup> Ch. iii. 12. Matt. viii. 4; xii. 16—18. Luke v. 14.

wished no further to trouble him. Jesus kindly set the fears of the ruler at rest, and assured him that he had equal power over the dead as the living, and could as easily raise those who had expired as those who were expiring.

38. *The tumult.* The confusion and weeping of the assembled people. ¶ *Wailed.* Making inarticulate, mournful sounds, howling for the dead.

39. *This ado.* This tumult, this bustle or confusion. ¶ *And weep.* Weep is this inordinate and improper manner. ¶ *But sleepeth.* See Matt. ix. 24.

41. *Talitha cumi.* This is the language which our Saviour commonly spoke. It is a mixture of Syriac and Chaldaic, called Syro-Chaldaic. The proper translation is given by the evangelist, *Damsel, arise.*

43. *Something should be given her to eat.* He had raised her by extraordinary power, but he willed that she should be

## CHAPTER VI.

*Christ despised at Capernaum, 1—6. Sends out the twelve, 7—13. Opinions about Jesus, 14—16. John Baptist beheaded, 17—30. The twelve return, 31. The five thousand fed in the desert, 32—44. Jesus walks on the lake, 46—49. Miracles in Genesareth, 50—56.*

AND he went out from thence, and came into his own country: and his disciples follow him.

2 And <sup>1</sup> when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, <sup>2</sup> and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended <sup>3</sup> at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, <sup>4</sup> A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 54—58. Luke iv. 16—22. John vi. 42. <sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 19. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xi. 6. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii. 57. John iv. 44.

sustained by ordinary means. He also in this gave full evidence that she was really restored to life and health. The changes were great, sudden, and certain. There could be no illusion. So when the Saviour had risen, he gave evidence of his own resurrection, by eating with his disciples. John xxi. 1—13.

## CHAPTER VI.

1—6. See this passage explained in the Notes on Matt. xiii. 54—58.

7. *By two and two.* In order that they might support and encourage each other in their work. Amidst the trials and opposition which they would meet with, mutual counsel and aid would greatly lighten their burdens, and alleviate their calamities. Mutual counsel might also con-

5 And <sup>5</sup> he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hand upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6 And he marvelled <sup>6</sup> because of their unbelief. And <sup>7</sup> he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 ¶ And <sup>8</sup> he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no <sup>9</sup> money in *their* purse:

9 But be shod <sup>10</sup> with sandals; <sup>11</sup> and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake <sup>12</sup> off the dust under your feet for a testimony

<sup>5</sup> Ch. ix. 23. Gen. xix. 22. <sup>6</sup> Isa. lix. 16. Jer. ii. 11. <sup>7</sup> Matt. ix. 35. Luke xlii. 22. Acts x. 38. <sup>8</sup> Ch. iii. 13—15. Matt. x. 1—19. Luke ix. 1—6; x. 3—12. <sup>9</sup> The word signifies a piece of brass money, in value somewhat less than a farthing, Matt. x. 9, but here it is taken in general for money; Luke ix. 3. <sup>10</sup> Eph. vi. 15. <sup>11</sup> Acts xii. 8. <sup>12</sup> Neh. v. 13. Acts xiii. 51.

tribute to their success, and lead to united plans to advance the kingdom of the Redeemer. Jesus here, as in all the work of religion, consulted at the same time the happiness and usefulness of his disciples; nor are they ever separated. Whatever contributes to the usefulness of the people, produces also their happiness; or in other words, the secret of being happy is to be useful.

8—11. See these verses fully explained in Matt. x. 9—15. In Matt. x. 5, they were commanded not to go among the Gentiles or Samaritans. Mark omits this direction, perhaps because he was writing for the Gentiles, and the direction might create unnecessary difficulty or offence. Perhaps he omits it also because the command was given for a temporary pur-

against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and <sup>1</sup> Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.<sup>2</sup>

13 And they cast out many <sup>3</sup> devils, and anointed with oil <sup>4</sup> many that were sick, and healed them.

14 And <sup>5</sup> king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad :) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

15 Others <sup>6</sup> said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 But when Herod heard there-

<sup>1</sup> Or. <sup>2</sup> Luke xxiv. 47. Acts ii. 38; iii. 19.  
<sup>3</sup> Luke x. 17. <sup>4</sup> Jas. v. 14. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xiv.  
1-12. Luke ix. 7-9. <sup>6</sup> Ch. viii. 28. Matt. xvi. 14.

pose, and was not in force at the time of his writing.

12. *Preached that men should repent.* See the nature of repentance explained, in Matt. iii. 2. They were now called upon to repent, and reform their lives, because sin was evil; because the Messiah had come to preach forgiveness to the penitent; and because at his presence it was fit that the nation should turn from its sins, and prepare to receive him.

13. *Cast out many devils.* See Note on Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *And anointed with oil, &c.* Anointing with oil was in common use among the Jews in cases of sickness. It was supposed to have a mild, soothing, and alleviating effect on the body. In James v. 14, the elders of the church, in connection with prayers, were directed also to anoint the sick with oil. It was also used in wounds. The good Samaritan poured in oil and wine into the wounds of the way-laid Jew. Luke x. 34. Josephus says, that in the last sickness of Herod, his physicians commanded him to be anointed with oil. It need not be supposed, however, that the apostles used oil for mere medical purposes. It was used, probably, like the imposition of hands, or

of. he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful <sup>7</sup> for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had <sup>8</sup> a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20 For Herod feared <sup>9</sup> John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed <sup>10</sup> him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

<sup>7</sup> Lev. xviii. 16. <sup>8</sup> Or, an inward grudge.  
<sup>9</sup> Exod. xi. 3. Ezek. ii. 5-7. <sup>10</sup> Or, kept him, or, saved him.

like our Saviour's anointing the eyes of the blind with clay, merely as a sign, in expectation of imparting that aid and comfort from God which was sought, and which was represented by the naturally soothing and gentle effect of oil.

14-20. See this account of the death of John the Baptist fully explained in Matt. xiv. 1-12.

20. *He did many things.* But he did not do the thing which was demanded of him, he did not break off from his sins. He attempted to make a compromise with his conscience. He still loved his sins, and did other things which he supposed might be accepted, in the place of putting away, as he ought, the wife of his brother, the polluted and adulterous woman, with whom he lived. Perhaps he treated John kindly, or spoke well of him, or aided him in his wants, and attempted in this way to silence his rebukes and destroy his faithfulness. This was probably before John was imprisoned. So sinners often treat ministers kindly, and do much to make them comfortable, and hear them gladly, while they are still unwilling to do the thing which is demanded of them, to repent and believe the gospel. They expect that their kind attentions will be

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his <sup>1</sup> birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee ;

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, <sup>2</sup> and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever <sup>3</sup> thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask ? And she said, The head of Johu the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head <sup>4</sup> of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry ; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent <sup>5</sup> an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought :

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xl. 20.    <sup>2</sup> Isa. iii. 16.    <sup>3</sup> Est. v. 2, 6 ; vii. 2.    <sup>4</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 12, 14.    <sup>5</sup> Or, one of his guard.

accepted in the place of what God demands, repentance and the forsaking of their sins.

30. *And the apostles gathered themselves together.* That is, those whom he had sent out two and two. Ver. 7. Having travelled around the country, they returned and met the Saviour at Capernaum.

31. *A desert place.* A retired place, across the sea from Capernaum, where they would be free from interruption. ¶ *Coming and going.* Coming to be healed and retiring, or coming to hear him preach. It means that they were

and he went and beheaded him in the prison.

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel : and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they <sup>6</sup> came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 And <sup>7</sup> the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while : for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion towards them, because <sup>8</sup> they were as sheep not

<sup>6</sup> Acts viii. 2.    <sup>7</sup> Luke ix. 10.    <sup>8</sup> 1 Kin. xxii. 17.

thronged, that a vast multitude attended his preaching.

32—44. See this miracle explained in Matt. xiv. 13—21.

32. *By ship.* By a boat, a small vessel. ¶ *Privately.* Without making their plan known. They intended to go privately. It appears, however, that their intention became known, and multitudes followed them.

33. *Afoot thither.* On foot to the place where they saw them going. ¶ *Out of all cities.* All cities or large towns in the neighbourhood.

34. *Much people—as sheep, &c.* They

having a shepherd : and he began to teach them many things.

35 And <sup>1</sup> when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed :

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread : for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall <sup>2</sup> we go and buy two hundred <sup>3</sup> pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat ?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye ? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And <sup>4</sup> he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiv. 15—21. Luke ix. 12—17. John vi. 5—14. <sup>2</sup> Num. xi. 13, 22. <sup>3</sup> Kin. iv. 43. <sup>4</sup> See on Matt. xviii. 28. <sup>5</sup> Ch. viii. 5. Matt. xv. 35.

had no one to teach them, and guide them. The priests and scribes were proud, corrupt, and despised the common people and neglected them.

35. *The time is far passed.* The day is almost gone. It is drawing near night.

37. *Two hundred pennyworth of bread.* About six pounds sterling. As the disciples had a common purse in which they carried their little property, consisting of the donations of their friends, and money to be given to the poor, compare Matt. xxvi. 8, 9, Luke viii. 3, John xii. 6, it is not improbable that they had, at this time, about this sum in their possession. Philip, for it was he who asked the question, John vi. 7, asked, with a mixture of wonder and agitation, whether they should take all their little property, and spend it on a single meal ? And even if we should, said he, it would not be sufficient to satisfy such a multitude.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, <sup>5</sup> and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them ; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And <sup>6</sup> they did all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

45 And <sup>7</sup> straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto <sup>8</sup> Bethsaida, while he sent away the people,

46 And when he had sent them away, he <sup>9</sup> departed into a mountain to pray.

47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Sam. ix. 13. Matt. xxvi. 26. Luke xxiv. 30. <sup>6</sup> Deut. viii. 3. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xiv. 22—33. John vi. 17—21. <sup>8</sup> Or, over against Bethsaida. <sup>9</sup> Ch. i. 35. Matt. vi. 6. Luke vi. 12.

It was implied in this, that in his view they could not provide for them if they wished to, and that it would be better to send them away than to attempt it.

40. *In ranks.* Literally, in the form of square beds in a garden. By square, regularly formed companies. ¶ *By hundreds and by fifties.* Some companies had a hundred in, and some fifty. We need not suppose that these were exactly formed, or arranged ; but that this was about the number. The expression indicates a multitude. There were so many, that they sat down, by hundreds and by fifties, in separate companies, on the green grass.

43. *Twelve baskets.* Baskets belonging to the disciples, in which they carried their provisions, or, perhaps, belonging to some of the multitude. ¶ *Fragment.* Broken pieces of the bread that remained.

45—56. See this passage explained in Matt. xiv. 22—36.

48 And he saw them toiling <sup>1</sup> in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed <sup>2</sup> by them.

49 But when they saw him <sup>3</sup> walking upon the sea, they <sup>4</sup> supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: <sup>5</sup> it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and <sup>6</sup> the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves: for their heart <sup>7</sup> was hardened.

53 And <sup>8</sup> when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come

out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And <sup>9</sup> ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch <sup>10</sup> if it were but the border <sup>11</sup> of his garment: and as many as touched <sup>12</sup> him were made whole.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Pharisaic traditions, 1—23. Syrophenician woman, 24—30. The deaf and dumb man cured, 31—37.*

**T**HEN <sup>13</sup> came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with <sup>14</sup> defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the

<sup>1</sup> John i. 13. <sup>2</sup> Luke xxiv. 28. <sup>3</sup> Job ix. 8. <sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv. 37. <sup>5</sup> Isa. xliii. 2. <sup>6</sup> Psa. xciii. 3, 4. <sup>7</sup> Isa. lxiii. 17. <sup>8</sup> Matt. xiv. 34.

<sup>9</sup> Ch. ii. 1—3. Matt. iv. 24. <sup>10</sup> Ch. v. 27, 28. Matt. ix. 20. Acts xix. 12. <sup>11</sup> Num. xv. 38, 39. <sup>12</sup> Or, *it*. <sup>13</sup> Matt. xv. 1—20. <sup>14</sup> Or, *common*.

52. *They considered not the miracle of the loaves.* They did not remember or call to mind the power which Jesus had shown in feeding the five thousand by a miracle, and, that having done that, he had power also to save them from the storm. ¶ *Their heart was hardened.* Their mind was dull to perceive it. This does not mean that they were opposed to Jesus, or that they had what we denominate hardness of heart, but simply, that they were slow to perceive his power, they did not quickly learn, as they ought to have done, that he had all power, and could therefore allay the storm. The word *heart* is frequently used in this sense. See Eph. i. 18, in Greek; Rom. i. 21; ii. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

54. *They knew him.* They recollected

him, for he had been there before, and worked miracles.

56. *The border of his garment.* Compare Note, Matt. ix. 20.

## CHAPTER VII.

1—23. See this passage explained in the Notes on Matt. xv. 1—20.

1. *Came from Jerusalem.* Probably to observe his conduct, and to find matter of accusation against him.

2. *Defiled hands.* The hands were considered defiled, or polluted, unless they were washed previous to every meal.

3. *Except they wash their hands oft.* The word *oft* means frequently, often. The word translated *oft* has been rendered various ways. Some have said that it means, up to the wrist; unless

Jews, except they wash *their hands* <sup>1</sup> oft, eat not, holding the tradition <sup>2</sup> of the elders.

4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, <sup>3</sup> they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and <sup>4</sup> pots, brassen vessels, and of <sup>5</sup> tables.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of

<sup>1</sup> Or, diligently: Gr. with the fist—up to the elbow: Theophylact. <sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 14. Col. ii. 8, 22, 23. <sup>3</sup> Job ix. 30, 31. <sup>4</sup> Sextarius is about a pint and a half. <sup>5</sup> Or, beds.

they wash their hands up to the wrist. Others have said, *up to the elbow*. There is evidence that the Pharisees had some such foolish rule as this about washing, and it is likely that they practised it faithfully. But the word, probably, means diligently, accurately, carefully. Unless they wash their hands carefully, or according to rule, &c. ¶ *The tradition*. What had been handed down, not what was delivered by writing in the law of Moses, but what had been communicated from father to son, as being proper and binding. ¶ *The elders*. The ancients, not the old men then living, but those who had lived formerly.

4. *Market*. This word means either the place where provisions were sold, or the place where men were convened for any purpose. In this place it probably means the former. ¶ *Except they wash*. In the original, *except they baptize*. In this place it does not mean to immerse the whole body, but the hands only. There is no evidence that the Jews washed their whole bodies every time they came from market. It is probable they washed as a mere ceremony; and often, doubtless, with the use of a very small quantity of water. ¶ *The washing of cups*. In the Greek, the baptism of cups. ¶ *Cups*. Drinking vessels. Those used at their meals. ¶ *Pots*. Measures of liquids. Vessels made of wood, used to hold wine, vinegar, &c. ¶ *Brassen vessels*. Vessels made of brass, used in cooking or otherwise. These, if much polluted, were commonly passed through the fire; if slightly polluted, they were washed.

the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias <sup>6</sup> prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their lips*, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For <sup>7</sup> laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of

<sup>6</sup> Isa. xxix. 13. <sup>7</sup> Isa. i. 12.

Earthen vessels, if defiled, were usually broken. ¶ *Tables*. This word means, in the original, beds or couches. It refers not to the tables on which they ate, but to the couches on which they reclined at their meals. See Notes on Matt. xxiii. 6. These were supposed to be defiled when any unclean or polluted person had reclined on them; and they deemed it necessary to purify them with water. The word *baptism* is here used, in the original, the baptism of tables; but as it cannot be supposed that couches were entirely immersed in water, the word baptism, here, must denote some other application of water, by sprinkling or otherwise, and shows that the term is used in the sense of washing in any way.\* If the word, here, is used, as is clear, to denote any thing except entire immersion, it may be elsewhere; and baptism is lawfully performed without immersing the whole body in water.

7. *For doctrines*. For commands of God binding on the conscience. Imposing your traditions as equal in authority to the commands of God.

8. *Laying aside*. Rejecting, or making it give place to traditions; considering the traditions as superior in authority to the divine law. This was the uniform doctrine of the Pharisees. See Matt. xv. 1—9. ¶ *The tradition of men*. What has been handed down by men, or what rests solely on their authority.

\* Jahn, in his *Antiquities*, sect. 326, does not concur with the commentator in this particular.—Editor.

pots and cups : and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye <sup>1</sup> reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honour <sup>2</sup> thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso <sup>3</sup> curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is Corban*, <sup>4</sup> that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*.

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *frustrate*: ver. 13. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xx. 12. Deut. v. 16. <sup>3</sup> Exod. xxi. 17. Lev. xx. 9. Prov. xx. 20. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xv. 5; xxiii. 18.

9. *Full well*. These words are capable of different interpretations. Some read them as a question: *Do ye do well in rejecting?* &c. Others suppose they mean *skilfully, cunningly*. You show great cunning, or art, in laying aside God's commands, and substituting in their place those of men. Others suppose them to be ironical. How nobly you act! From conscientious attachment to your traditions, you have made void the law of God; meaning to intimate by it that they had acted wickedly and basely.

17. *The parable*. The obscure and difficult remarks which he had made in ver. 15. The word *parable*, here, means *obscure and difficult saying*. They could not understand it. They had probably misheard many of the popular notions of the Pharisees, and they could not understand why a man was not defiled by external things. It was, moreover, a doctrine of the law, that men were ceremonially polluted by contact with dead bodies, &c., and they could not understand how it could be otherwise.

18. *Cannot defile him. Cannot render*

14 ¶ And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Harken unto me every one of *you*, and understand: <sup>5</sup>

15 There is nothing from without a man that, entering into him, can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If <sup>6</sup> any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And <sup>7</sup> when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it cannot defile him*;

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but <sup>8</sup> into the belly, and

<sup>5</sup> Prov. viii. 5. Isa. vi. 9. Acts viii. 30. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xi. 15. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xv. 15—20. <sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 13.

his soul polluted; cannot make him a sinner, so as to need this purifying as a religious observance.

19. *Entereth not into his heart*. Does not reach or affect the mind, the soul, and consequently cannot pollute it. Even if it should affect the body, yet it cannot affect the soul, and consequently cannot need to be cleansed by a religious ordinance. The notions of the Pharisees, therefore, are not founded in reason, but are mere superstition. ¶ *The draught*. The sink, the vault. ¶ *Purging all meats*. The word *purging*, here, means to purify, to cleanse. What is thrown out of the body is the innutritious part of the food taken into the stomach, and leaving only that which is proper for the support of life; and it cannot, therefore, defile the soul. ¶ *All meats*. All food; all that is taken into the body to support life. The meaning is, that the economy or process by which life is supported, purifies or renders nutritious all kinds of food. The unwholesome parts are separated, and the wholesome only are taken into the system. This agrees with all



goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For <sup>1</sup> from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, covetousness, <sup>2</sup> wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness :

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 ¶ And <sup>3</sup> from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but <sup>4</sup> he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet :

26 The woman was a <sup>5</sup> Greek, a

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vi. 5. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xiv. 1, 3; III. 1, 3. Jer. xvii. 9. <sup>3</sup> *Corruptness, wickedness.* <sup>4</sup> Matt. xv. 21—31. <sup>5</sup> Ch. ii. 1. <sup>6</sup> Or, *Gentile*: Isa. xlix. 12.

that has since been discovered of the process of digestion, and of the support of life. The food taken into the stomach is converted by the gastric juice, into a thick pulp, called chyme. The nutritious part of this is conveyed into small vessels, and changed into a milky substance called chyle. This is changed into blood, and the blood conveys nutriment and support to all parts of the system. The useless parts of the food are thrown off.

20. *That which cometh out of the man.* His words; the expression of his thoughts and feelings; his conduct, as the expression of inward malice, anger, covetousness, lust, &c. ¶ *Defileth the man.* Is really polluted, or offensive in the sight of God. They render the soul corrupt and abominable in the sight of God. See Matt. xv. 18—20.

24—30. See this miracle explained in Matt. xv. 21—28.

Syrophœnician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for <sup>6</sup> it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet <sup>7</sup> the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For <sup>8</sup> this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone <sup>9</sup> out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31 ¶ And <sup>10</sup> again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impedi-

<sup>6</sup> Matt. vii. 6; x. 5, 6. <sup>7</sup> Rom. xv. 8, 9. Eph. ii. 12—14. <sup>8</sup> Isa. lxvi. 2. <sup>9</sup> 1 John iii. 8. <sup>10</sup> Matt. xv. 29—31.

24. *Would have no man know it.* To avoid the designs of the Pharisees, he wished to be retired.

26. *A Greek.* The Jews called all persons Greeks who were not of their nation. Compare Rom. i. 14. The whole world was considered as divided into Jews and Greeks. Though she might not have been strictly a Greek, yet she came under this general appellation.

31. *Departing from the coasts.* The country, or regions of Tyre. ¶ *Came unto the sea of Galilee.* The sea of Tiberias. ¶ *Decapolis.* See Matt. iv. 25. He did not go immediately into Capernaum, or any city where he was known, but into the retired regions around the sea of Galilee. This was done to avoid the designs of the Pharisees who sought his life.

32. *They bring.* That is, his friends

ment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and <sup>1</sup> he spit, and touched his tongue;

34 And <sup>2</sup> looking up to heaven, <sup>3</sup> he sighed, and saith unto him, EPHPHATHA, that is, Be opened.

35 And <sup>4</sup> straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 23. John ix. 6. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vi. 41. John xi. 41; xvii. 1. <sup>3</sup> John xi. 33, 38. <sup>4</sup> Isa. lxxv. 5, 6. Matt. xi. 5.

brought, or the people brought. ¶ *One that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech.* Not entirely dumb, but who spoke indistinctly or with difficulty. His deafness might not have been of long standing; and his speech, therefore, might not have been entirely ruined. ¶ *To put his hand upon him.* That is, to cure him. Blessings were commonly imparted by laying on the hands.

33. *And he took him aside from the multitude.* Why this was done we have no means of information. It might have been to conceal from the multitude every thing respecting the manner of cure, in order that none might attempt to cure in a similar way. ¶ *And he put his fingers into his ears, &c.* Why this was done it has been found exceedingly difficult to explain. Our Lord had power at once to open his ears and loose his tongue, but for some cause he chose to accompany it with a sign. It was intended, probably, simply as a sign that the power of healing came from Jesus, to satisfy the man by the touch that he had this power, and that it could come from no other quarter. Our Saviour often used signs in this way to denote his power to heal. See Mark viii. 23; John ix. 6.

34. *Looking up to heaven.* To lift up the eyes to heaven is an act imploring aid from

37 And were beyond measure astonished, <sup>5</sup> saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh <sup>6</sup> both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Four thousand fed, 1—9. The sign refused, 10—13. The disciples cautioned, 14—21. The blind man of Bethsaida cured, 22—26. Christ foretells his sufferings, 27—33. Worth of the soul, 34—38.*

IN <sup>7</sup> those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them.

2 I have compassion <sup>8</sup> on the multitude, because they have now

<sup>5</sup> Psa. cxxxix. 14. Acts xiv. 11. <sup>6</sup> Exod. iv. 10, 11. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xv. 32—39. <sup>8</sup> Psa. cxlv. 8, 15. Heb. v. 2.

God, and denotes an attitude of prayer. Ps. cxxi. 1, 2. Mark vi. 41. John xi. 41. ¶ *He sighed.* Pitying the sufferings of the man who stood before him. ¶ *Ephphatha.* This word is Syriac, the language which our Lord used in addressing the man, and means *be opened*.

35. *The string of his tongue was loosed.* The difficulty in his speaking was removed.

36. *Tell no man.* Do not noise it abroad. Jesus was not ambitious of being known; and he knew that if much was said of his cures, it would excite the jealousy of the Pharisees, and endanger his life.

37. *Beyond measure.* Exceedingly; very much. In the Greek, *very abundantly*. ¶ *He hath done all things well.* All things in a remarkable manner; or he has perfectly effected the cure of the deaf and the dumb.

## CHAPTER VIII.

1—9. See this passage explained in Matt. xv. 32—39.

1. *In those days.* While in the wilderness, where he had cured the deaf and dumb man. ¶ *Having nothing to eat.* Having come unprovided, or having consumed what they had brought.

2. *I have compassion.* I pity their condition. I am disposed to relieve them.

been with me three days, and have nothing to eat :

3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.

4 And his disciples answered him, From <sup>1</sup> whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness ?

5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye ? And they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them*; and they did set *them* before the people.

7 And they had a few small fishes: and he <sup>2</sup> blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them*.

8 So they did eat, and <sup>3</sup> were filled: and <sup>4</sup> they took up of the broken *meat* that was left, seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 36—44. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiv. 19. <sup>3</sup> Psal. cvil. 5, 6; cxlv. 16. <sup>4</sup> 1 Kin. xvii. 14—16. 2 Kin. iv. 2—7, 42—44.

9. *Four thousand.* Four thousand men, besides women and children. See Matt. xv. 38.

10. *Dalmanutha.* In Matt. xv. 39, it is said that he came into the coasts of Magdala. See Note on the place.

11—21. See this passage explained in Matt. xvi. 1—12.

12. *Sighed deeply in his spirit.* His soul, his heart, was deeply affected at their wickedness and hypocrisy. The word *spirit* here means human soul. He drew groans deeply from his breast. ¶ *No sign be given.* That is, no such sign as they asked, to wit, a sign from heaven. He said a sign should be given, the same as was furnished by Jonas,

10 ¶ And <sup>5</sup> straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And <sup>6</sup> the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

13 And he left them, and, entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

14 ¶ Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware <sup>7</sup> of the leaven <sup>8</sup> of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it*, he saith unto them, Why reason ye,

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xv. 38. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xii. 38; xvi. 1—4. John vi. 30. <sup>7</sup> Prov. xix. 27. Luke xii. 1. <sup>8</sup> Exod. xii. 20. Lev. ii. 11. 1 Cor. v. 6—8.

Matt. xvi. 4. But this was not what they asked, nor would it be given, because they asked *it*.

15. *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.* See Matt. xvi. 6. ¶ *Of Herod.* Of the Herodians, of Herod and his followers. Matthew, instead of Herod has the Sadducees. It is not improbable that he cautioned them against them all. The Pharisees sought his life, and were exceedingly corrupt in their doctrine and practice; the Sadducees denied some of the essential doctrines of religion; and the Herodians, it is supposed, maintained the opinion that it was lawful for the Jews to acknowledge a foreign prince, and joined equally with the Pharisees and Sadducees

because ye have no bread? perceive  
 1 ye not yet, neither understand?  
 have ye your 2 heart yet hardened?

18 Having 3 eyes, see ye not?  
 and having ears, hear ye not? and  
 do ye not 4 remember?

19 When I brake the five 5  
 loaves among five thousand, how  
 many baskets full of fragments took  
 ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

20 And when the seven, 6 among  
 four thousand, how many baskets  
 full of fragments took ye up? And  
 they said, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How  
 is it that ye do not understand?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 52. <sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 5; xvi. 14. <sup>3</sup> Isa.  
 xlv. 18. <sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. i. 12. <sup>5</sup> Ch. vi. 38, 44.  
 Matt. xiv. 17-21. Luke ix. 12-17. John vi.  
 5-13. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 1-9. Matt. xv. 34-38.

in opposing the claims of Jesus. Matthew  
 has recorded his caution to avoid the  
 Pharisees and Sadducees, and Mark has  
 added, what Matthew has omitted, the  
 caution likewise to beware of the He-  
 rodians. Thus the evangelists speak the  
 same thing.

22. *To Bethsaida.* See Note on Matt.  
 xi. 21. ¶ *Besought him to touch him.*  
 That is, to heal him; for they believed  
 that his touch would restore his sight.

23. *Led him out of the town.* Why  
 this was done the sacred writers have not  
 told us. It might have been to avoid the  
 collecting of a multitude, and thus to escape  
 the designs of the Pharisees, who were at-  
 tempting to take his life, and chiefly on a  
 charge of sedition, and of exciting the  
 people. On this account Jesus chose to  
 perform the miracle alone; thus showing,  
 that while he did good he desired to do it  
 in such a way as to avoid the appearance  
 of evil, and to prevent, at the same time,  
 ostentation and the malice of his enemies.  
 ¶ *Spit on his eyes.* Why this was done  
 is not known. It was evidently not in-  
 tended to perform the cure by any nat-  
 ural effect of the spittle. It was to the  
 man a sign, an evidence, that it was the  
 power of Jesus. The eyes were probably  
 closed. They were perhaps gummed, or  
 united together by a secretion that had be-  
 come hard. To apply spittle to them, to  
 wet them, would be a sign, a natural ex-

22 ¶ And he cometh to Beth-  
 saida; and they bring a blind man  
 unto him, and besought him to  
 touch 7 him.

23 And he took the blind man  
 by the hand, and led him out of the  
 town; and when he had spit 8  
 on his eyes, and put his hands up-  
 on him, he asked him if he saw  
 ought.

24 And he looked up, and said, 9  
 I see men as trees, walking.

25 After that he put his hands  
 again upon his eyes, and made him  
 look up: and he was restored, and  
 saw 10 every man clearly.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. viii. 3. 15. <sup>8</sup> Ch. vii. 33. <sup>9</sup> Judg.  
 ix. 30. Isa. xxix. 18. <sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 11, 12.  
<sup>11</sup> Prov. iv. 18. Isa. xxxii. 3. <sup>12</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 9.

pression of removing the obstruction and  
 opening them. The power was not  
 in the spittle, but it attended the ap-  
 plication of it. ¶ *Saw ought.* Saw any  
 thing.

24. *I see men as trees, walking.* I  
 see men walking, but see them so in-  
 distinctly, that but for their motion I  
 could not distinguish them from trees. I  
 cannot distinctly see their shapes and  
 features. Probably our Lord did not at  
 once restore the man fully to sight, that  
 he might strengthen his faith. Seeing that  
 Jesus had partially restored him, it was  
 evidence that he could restore him wholly,  
 and it led him to exercise faith anew in  
 him, and to feel more strikingly his de-  
 pendence on him.

25. *Every man clearly.* Could see  
 their form and features. His sight was  
 completely restored. Though our Lord  
 did not, by this, probably, intend to teach  
 any lesson in regard to the way in which  
 the mind of a sinner is enlightened, yet  
 it affords a striking illustration of it.  
 Sinners are by nature blind. John ix. 39.  
 2 Cor. iv. 4. 1 John ii. 11. The effect  
 of religion, or of the influence of the  
 Holy Spirit, is to open the eyes, to show  
 the sinner his condition and his danger, and  
 to lead him to look on him whom he has  
 pierced. Yet at first he sees indistinctly.  
 He does not soon learn to distinguish objects.  
 When converted he is in a new world.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.

27 ¶ And <sup>1</sup> Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cæsarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, John <sup>2</sup> the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou <sup>3</sup> art the Christ.

30 And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 15-28. Luke ix. 18-22. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiv. 2. <sup>3</sup> John i. 41-49; vi. 69; xi. 27. Acts viii. 37. 1 John v. 1.

Light is shed on every object, and he sees the scriptures, the Saviour, and the works of creation, the sun, and stars, and hills, and vales, in a new light. He sees the beauty of the plan of salvation, and wonders that he has not seen it before. Yet he sees at first indistinctly. It is only by repeated applications to the Source of light that he sees all things clearly. At first religion may appear full of mysteries. Doctrines and facts appear on every hand that he cannot fully comprehend. His mind is still perplexed, and he may doubt whether he has ever seen aught, or has been ever renewed. Yet let him not despair. Light, in due time, will be shed on these obscure and mysterious truths. Faithful and repeated application to the Father of lights in prayer, and in searching the scriptures,

he rebuked <sup>4</sup> Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, <sup>5</sup> Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 ¶ And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever <sup>6</sup> will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For <sup>7</sup> whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever <sup>8</sup> therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. iii. 19. <sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. v. 5. <sup>6</sup> Matt. x. 38; xvi. 24. Luke ix. 23; xiv. 27. Tit. ii. 12. <sup>7</sup> Est. iv. 14. Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25. Luke ix. 24; xvii. 33. John xii. 25. 2 Tim. ii. 11; iv. 6, 8. Rev. ii. 10; vii. 14-18. <sup>8</sup> Luke xii. 9. 2 Tim. i. 8.

and in the ordinances of religion, will dissipate all these doubts, and he will see all things clearly, and the universe will appear to be filled with one broad flood of light.

26. *The town.* The town of Bethsaida. ¶ *Nor tell it, &c.* Lest it excite the jealousy of the Pharisees, and produce commotion and danger.

27-38. See this passage illustrated in Matt. xvi. 13-28.

32. *He spake that saying openly.* With boldness or confidence, or without parables or figures; so that there could be no possibility of misunderstanding him.

38. *Ashamed of me.* Ashamed to own attachment to me on account of my lowly appearance, and my poverty, contempt, and sufferings. ¶ *And of my words.* My doctrines, my instructions.

## CHAPTER IX.

*The transfiguration, 2—10. Elias come, 11—13. The young demoniac cured, 14—29. Jesus foretells his sufferings, 30—32. Christ teaches humility to the disciples, 33—37. And rebukes a party spirit, 38—50.*

**A**ND he said unto them, Verily <sup>1</sup> I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not <sup>2</sup> taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

2 ¶ And <sup>3</sup> after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white <sup>4</sup> as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: <sup>5</sup> and let us make three

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 28. Luke ix. 27. <sup>2</sup> John viii. 12. Heb. ii. 9. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xvii. 1—9. Luke ix. 28—36. <sup>4</sup> Dan. vii. 9. Matt. xxviii. 3. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxiii. 2; lxxxiv. 10.

¶ *This adulterous and sinful generation.* This age given to wickedness, particularly to adultery. ¶ *In the glory of his Father.* In the day of judgment. See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 64. The meaning of this verse is, whosoever shall refuse, through pride or wickedness, to acknowledge and serve Christ here, shall be excluded from his kingdom hereafter. He was lowly, meek, and despised. Yet there was an inimitable beauty in his character even then. But he will come again in awful grandeur, not as the babe of Bethlehem, not as the man of Nazareth, but as the Son of God, in majesty and glory. They that would not acknowledge him here must be rejected by him there; they that would not serve him always, will never enjoy him; they that

tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6 For he wist not <sup>6</sup> what to say; for they were sore afraid.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This <sup>7</sup> is my beloved Son: hear <sup>8</sup> him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.<sup>9</sup>

11 ¶ And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias <sup>10</sup> must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written <sup>11</sup> of the Son of man,

<sup>9</sup> Dan. x. 13. Rev. i. 17. <sup>10</sup> Psa. li. 7. Matt. iii. 17. 2 Pet. i. 17. <sup>11</sup> Deut. xviii. 15. <sup>12</sup> Acts xviii. 18. <sup>13</sup> Mal. iv. 5. <sup>14</sup> Psa. cxiii. Isa. liii. Dan. ix. 26. Zech. xiii. 7.

would cast him out and despise him, must be cast out by him, and consigned to eternal, hopeless sorrows.

## CHAPTER IX.

1. *Verily I say, &c.* See Notes on Matt. xvi. 28. This verse properly belongs to the preceding chapter, and the preceding discourse.

2—10. *And after six days, &c.* See this passage explained on Matt. xvii. 1—9.

3. *No fuller.* Rather, no scourer. The office of the person here mentioned was to scour or whiten cloth; not to full it, or to render it thicker.

6. *He wist not.* He knew not. He was desirous of saying something, and he knew not what would be proper.

11—13. *Why say the scribes, &c.* See Notes on Matt. xvii. 10—13.

that he must suffer many things, and be<sup>1</sup> set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, That<sup>2</sup> Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

14 ¶ And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye<sup>3</sup> with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb<sup>4</sup> spirit;

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth<sup>5</sup> him: and he foameth,<sup>6</sup> and gnasheth with his teeth,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxiv. 22. Luke xxiii. 11. Phil. ii. 7. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xi. 14. Luke i. 17. <sup>3</sup> Or, among yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xii. 22. Luke xi. 14. <sup>5</sup> Or, dasheth him. <sup>6</sup> Job xvi. 9. Psa. cxli. 10. Acts vii. 54. Jude 13.

14—29. See this passage explained in the Notes on Matt. xvii. 14—21.

14. *Questioning with them.* Debating with the disciples, and attempting to confound them. This he saw as he came down from the mount. In his absence they had taken occasion to attempt to perplex and confound his followers.

15. *Were greatly amazed.* Were astonished and surprised at his sudden appearance among them. ¶ *Saluted him.* Received him with the customary marks of affection and respect. It is probable that this was not by any formal manner of salutation, but by the rush of the multitude, and by hailing him as the Messiah.

16. *What question ye?* What is the subject of your inquiry or debate with the disciples?

17. *A dumb spirit.* A spirit which deprived his son of the power of speaking.

18. *And wheresoever.* In whatever place, at home or abroad, alone or in public. ¶ *He teareth him.* He rends,

and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless<sup>7</sup> generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.<sup>8</sup>

22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him,<sup>9</sup> If thou

<sup>7</sup> Deut. xxxii. 20. Psa. lxxviii. 8. Heb. iii. 10. <sup>8</sup> Job v. 7. Psa. li. 5. <sup>9</sup> Ch. xi. 23. 2 Chron. xx. 20. Matt. xvii. 20. Luke xvii. 6. John xi. 40. Heb. xi. 6.

distracts, or throws him into convulsions. ¶ *He foameth.* At the mouth, like a mad animal. Among us, these would all be considered as marks of violent derangement or madness. ¶ *And pineth away.* Becomes thin, haggard, and emaciated. This was the effect of the violence of his struggles, and perhaps of the want of food.

22. *If thou canst do any thing.* I have brought him to the disciples, and they could not help him. If thou canst do anything, have compassion, &c.

23. *If thou canst believe.* This was an answer to the request; and there was a reference in the answer to the doubt in the man's mind about the power of Jesus. I can help him. If thou canst believe, it shall be done. Jesus here demanded faith or confidence in his power of healing. So he demands faith of every sinner that comes to him; and none that come without confidence in him can obtain the blessing. ¶ *All things are possible to*

canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears,<sup>1</sup> Lord, I believe; help<sup>2</sup> thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent<sup>3</sup> him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the<sup>4</sup> hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

<sup>1</sup> Psal. cxvi. 5.    <sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 2.    <sup>3</sup> Rev. xii. 12.    <sup>4</sup> Isa. xli. 13.

*him that believeth.* All things can be effected or accomplished; to wit, by God; in favour of him that believes; and if thou canst believe, this will be done. God will do nothing in our favour without faith. It is right that we should have confidence in him; and if we have confidence, it is easy for him to help us, and he willingly does it. In our weakness, then, we should go to God our Saviour; and though we have no strength, yet he can aid us, and he will make all things easy for us.

24. *Said with tears.* The man felt the implied rebuke in the Saviour's language. And feeling grieved that he should be thought to be destitute of faith; and feeling deeply for the welfare of his afflicted son, he wept. Nothing can be more touching or natural than this. An anxious father distressed at the condition of his son, having applied to the disciples in vain, now coming to the Saviour, and not having full confidence that he had the proper qualification to be aided, he wept. Any man would have wept in his condition, nor would the Saviour turn

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by<sup>5</sup> prayer and fasting.<sup>6</sup>

30 ¶ And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask<sup>7</sup> him.

33 ¶ And<sup>8</sup> he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed

<sup>5</sup> Eph. vi. 18.    <sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 27.    <sup>7</sup> John xvi. 19.    <sup>8</sup> Matt. xviii. 1-6.    Luke ix. 46-50; xxii. 24-27.

the weeping suppliant away. ¶ *I believe.* I have faith. I do put confidence in thee; though I know that my faith is not as strong as it should be. ¶ *Lord.* This word, here, signifies merely master, or sir, as it does often in the New Testament. We have no evidence that the man had any knowledge of the divine nature of our Saviour; and he applied the word, probably, as he would have done to any other teacher or worker of miracles. ¶ *Help thou mine unbelief.* Supply thou the defects of my faith. Give me strength and grace to put entire confidence in thee. Every one who comes to the Saviour for help has need of offering this prayer. In our unbelief and our doubts we need his aid; nor can we ever put sufficient reliance on him without his gracious help.

30-33. See Matt. xvii. 22, 23.

31. *Is delivered.* Is given to men to make an atonement by his sufferings and death, and will in due time be taken and killed.

33-37. See Notes on Matt. xviii. 1-5.



among themselves, who *should be* the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If <sup>1</sup> any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever <sup>2</sup> shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 43. Matt. xx. 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Luke ix. 48.

38. *We saw one*, &c. There is no improbability in supposing that this might have been one of the disciples of John, or one of the seventy whom Jesus had sent out, and who, though he did not personally attend on Jesus, yet had the power of working miracles. There is no evidence that he was merely an exorcist, or that he used the name of Jesus merely as a pretence.

39. *Forbid him not*. Do not prevent his doing good. If he can work a miracle in my name, it is sufficient proof of attachment to me, and he should not be prevented. ¶ *Can lightly speak evil of me*. The word here rendered *lightly*, means quickly, or immediately. The meaning of the passage is, that he to whom God gave the power of working a miracle, by that gave evidence that he could not soon be found among the enemies of Jesus. He ought not therefore, to be prevented from doing it. There is no reason to think, here, that John had any improper designs in opposing the man. He thought that it was evidence that he could not be right, because he did not join them and follow the Saviour. Our Lord thought differently. He opposed no one who gave evidence that he loved him. Wherever he might be, or whatever his work, yet, if he did it in the name of Jesus, and with the approbation of God, it was evidence sufficient that he was right. Christians should rejoice in

38 ¶ And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw <sup>3</sup> one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there <sup>4</sup> is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For <sup>5</sup> he that is not against us is on our part.

41 For <sup>6</sup> whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

<sup>3</sup> Num. xi. 26-28. <sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 3. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xii. 30. <sup>6</sup> Matt. x. 42; xxv. 40.

good done by their brethren of any denomination. There are men calling themselves Christians who seem to look with doubt and suspicion on all that is done by those who do not walk with them. They undervalue their labours, attempt to lessen the evidences of their success, and to diminish their influence. True likeness to the Saviour would lead us to rejoice in all the good accomplished, by whomsoever it may be done; and to rejoice that the kingdom of Christ is advanced, whether by a Presbyterian, an Episcopalian, a Baptist, or a Methodist. Compare Phil. i. 18.

41. *Whosoever shall give you a cup*, &c. How easy it is to be a Christian! What is easier than to give a cup of cold water to a thirsty disciple of Jesus! But it must be in his name, that is, because he is a Christian, and therefore from love to the Saviour. This is very different from giving it from a mere motive of common kindness. If done from love to Christ, it will be rewarded; and hence we learn that the humblest acts of Christians, the lowest service that is rendered, will be graciously noticed by Jesus and rewarded. None is so humble in his kingdom as not to be able to do good; and none so poor that, in his circumstances, may not show attachment to him. The feeblest service will be accepted; and acts of love, that may be forgotten by man, will be remembered by him, and rewarded in heaven.

42 And whosoever shall offend <sup>1</sup> one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And <sup>2</sup> if thy hand offend <sup>3</sup> thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 Where <sup>4</sup> their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii. 6. Luke xvii. 1. 2. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xiii. 6. Matt. v. 30. <sup>3</sup> Or, cause thee to offend; and so ver. 45 and 47. <sup>4</sup> Isa. lxvi. 24. Rev. xiv. 11.

42—50. See Matt. xviii. 7—9. *Millstone*. See Matt. xviii. 6.

44, 46. *Their worm*. This figure is clearly taken from Isa. lxvi. 24. In describing the great prosperity of the kingdom of the Messiah, Isaiah says that the people of God shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of men who have transgressed against God. Their enemies shall be overcome. They shall be slain. The people of God shall triumph. The figure is taken from heaps of the dead slain in battle; and the prophet says that the number shall be so great that their worm—the worm feeding on the dead—shall not die, shall live long, as long as there are carcasses to be devoured; and that the fire which was used to burn the bodies of the dead shall continue long to burn, and shall not be extinguished till they are consumed. The figure, therefore, denotes great misery, and certain and terrible destruction. In these verses it is applied to the state beyond the grave, and is intended to denote that the destruction of the wicked will be awful, wide-spread, and eternal. It is not to be supposed that there will be any real worm in hell, perhaps not material fire. Nor can it be told what was particularly intended by the undying worm. There is no authority for applying it, as is often done, to remorse of conscience, any more than to any other of the pains and reflections of hell. It is a mere image of loathsome, dreadful, and eternal sufferings. In what that suffering will consist, it is probably

cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye <sup>5</sup> offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire <sup>6</sup> is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be salted

<sup>5</sup> See ver. 43. Gen. iii. 6. Job xxxi. 1. Psa. cxix. 37. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 44, 46. Luke xvi. 24—26.

beyond the power of any living mortal to imagine. The word *their*, in the phrase *their worm*, is used merely to keep up the image or figure. Dead bodies, putrefying in that valley, would be overrun with worms, while the fire was not confined to them, but spread to other objects, kindled by combustibles through all the valley. It is not meant, therefore, that every particular sufferer has a peculiar worm, or has particular sins that cause remorse of conscience. That is a truth; but it does not appear that it is intended to be taught here.

49. *Every one shall be salted with fire*. Perhaps no passage in the New Testament has given more perplexity to commentators than this; and it may be impossible now to fix its precise meaning. The common meaning affixed to it has been, that as salt preserves from putrefaction, so fire, applied to the wicked in hell, shall have the property of preserving them in existence, or they shall be preserved amidst the sprinkling of fire, to be continually in their sufferings, a sacrifice to the justice of God. But this meaning is not quite satisfactory. Another opinion has been, that as salt is sprinkled on the victim preparatory to its being devoted to God, see Lev. ii. 13, so should the apostles, by trials, calamities, &c., represented here by fire, be prepared as a sacrifice and offering to God. Probably the passage has not reference at all to future punishment; and the difficulty of interpreting it has arisen from supposing it connected with

with fire, and every sacrifice<sup>1</sup> shall be salted with salt.

50 Salt is good: but if the salt<sup>2</sup> have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have<sup>3</sup> salt in yourselves, and have<sup>4</sup> peace one with another.

## CHAPTER X.

*The law of marriage, 1—12. Young children blessed, 13—16. The rich young man, 17—27. Sacrifices for Christ rewarded, 28—31. Christ foretells his sufferings a third time, 32—34. James and John's ambition, 35—45. Blind Bartimaeus, 46—52.*

AND<sup>5</sup> he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judæa by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto

<sup>1</sup> Lev. ii. 13. Ezech. xliii. 24. <sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 13. Luke xiv. 34. <sup>3</sup> Col. iv. 6. <sup>4</sup> Psa. xxxiv. 14. <sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Heb. xii. 14. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xix. 1—12. John x. 40.

ver. 48, or given as a reason for what is said in that verse, rather than considering it as designed to illustrate the general design of the passage. The main scope of the passage was not to discourse of future punishment. That is brought in incidentally. The chief object of the passage was, 1. To teach them that other men, not with them, might be true Christians. Ver. 38, 39. 2. That they should be disposed to look favourably upon the slightest evidence that they might be. Ver. 41. 3. That they ought to avoid giving offence to such feeble and obscure Christians. Ver. 42. 4. That everything calculated to give offence, or to dishonour religion, should be removed. Ver. 43. And 5. That everything which would endanger their salvation should be sacrificed; that they should deny themselves and practise all self-denials, in order to obtain eternal life. In this way they would be preserved to eternal life. The word *fire* here, therefore, denotes self-denials, sacrifices, trials, in keeping ourselves from the gratification of the flesh. As if he had said: 'Look at the sacrifice on the altar. It is an offering to God, about to be presented to him. It is

him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 ¶ And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, Moses<sup>6</sup> suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

6 But from the beginning of the creation God made<sup>7</sup> them male and female.

7 For<sup>8</sup> this cause shall a man

<sup>6</sup> Dent. xxiv. 1. Matt. v. 31. <sup>7</sup> Gen. i. 27: v. 2. Mal. ii. 15. <sup>8</sup> Gen. ii. 24.

sprinkled with salt, emblematic of purity, of preservation, and of fitting it, therefore, for a sacrifice. So you are devoted to God. You are sacrifices, victims, offerings, to him in his service. To make you acceptable offerings, everything must be done to preserve you from sin, to purify you, and to make you fit offerings. Self-denials, subduing the lusts, enduring trials, removing offences, are the proper preservatives in the service of God. Doing this, you will be acceptable offerings, and be saved; without this, you will be unfit for his eternal service, and will be lost.

50. *Lost his saltness, &c.* See Note, Matt. v. 13. ¶ *Have salt in yourselves.* Have the preserving, purifying principle always; the principles of denying yourselves, of suppressing pride, ambition, contention, &c., and thus you will be as acceptable offering to God. ¶ *Have peace.* Avoid contention and quarrelling, struggling for places, honours, and office, and seek each other's welfare, and religion will be honoured and preserved in the world.

## CHAPTER X.

1—12. See this question about divorce explained on Matt. xix. 1—12.

leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife ;

8 And they twain shall be one <sup>1</sup> flesh : so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

11 And he saith unto them, <sup>2</sup> Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. v. 31. <sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 32 ; xix. 9. Luke xvi. 18. Rom. vii. 3. <sup>1</sup> Cor. vii. 10, 11.

12. *And if a woman shall put away her husband.* It would seem from this, that a woman, among the Jews, had the power of separating herself from her husband ; yet this right is not given her by the law of Moses. There is not, however, any positive evidence that females often claimed or exercised this right. Cases had occurred, indeed, in which it had been done. The wife of Herod had rejected her former husband, and married Herod. And though instances of this kind might have been attempted to be defended by the example of Pagans, yet our Saviour was desirous of showing them that it did not free them from the charge of adultery. The apostles were going forth to teach pagan nations, and it was proper for Christ to teach them how to act in such cases, and to show them that they were cases of real adultery.

13—16. See Notes on Matt. xix. 13—15.

13. *Should touch them.* That is, should lay his hands on them, and pray for them, and bless them. Compare Matt. xix. 13. It was common to lay the hands on the head of a person for whom a blessing was asked. See the case of Jacob, Gen. xlviii. 14.

14. *Saw it.* Saw the conduct of his disciples. ¶ *Was much displeased.* Because, first, it was a pleasure to him to receive and bless little children ; and, se-

condly, they were doing what they were not commanded to do, interfering in a case where it was evidently improper.

13 ¶ And <sup>3</sup> they brought young children to him, that he should touch them : and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14 But when Jesus saw it, he was <sup>4</sup> much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such <sup>5</sup> is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. <sup>6</sup>

16 And he took them up in his

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xix. 13. Luke xviii. 15. <sup>4</sup> Eph. iv. 26. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xviii. 10. <sup>1</sup> Cor. xiv. 20. <sup>1</sup> Pet. ii. 2. Rev. xiv. 5. <sup>6</sup> John iii. 3—6.

condly, they were doing what they were not commanded to do, interfering in a case where it was evidently improper.

15. *Whosoever shall not receive.* Whosoever shall not manifest the spirit of a little child. ¶ *The kingdom of God.* The gospel. The new dispensation by the Messiah, or the reign of God through a Mediator. See Notes Matt. iii. 2. ¶ *As a little child.* With the temper and spirit of a child, teachable, mild, humble, and free from prejudice and obstinacy. ¶ *Shall not enter therein.* Shall not be a Christian, shall not be a real member of the family of Christ on earth ; though he may be a professor he shall never enter heaven.

16. *Took them up in his arms.* These were small children. ¶ *Blessed them.* Prayed for them, sought a blessing on them, or gave them the assurance of his favour as the Messiah.

How happy would it be if all parents thus felt it to be their privilege to present their children to Christ. The question with a parent should be, not whether he ought to present them by prayer, but whether he may do it. And so, too, the question respecting infant baptism is not so much whether a parent ought to devote his children to God in this ordinance, as whether he may do it. It is an inestimable privilege to do it, not a matter of mere stern and

arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.<sup>1</sup>

17 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there* is none good but one, <sup>3</sup> *that is*, God.

19 Thou knowest the <sup>4</sup> commandments, Do not commit adul-

tery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all <sup>5</sup> these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One <sup>6</sup> thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure <sup>7</sup> in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xl. 11. Luke ii. 28—34. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 16—22. Luke xviii. 18—25. <sup>3</sup> Psal. lxxvi. 5; cxix. 68. <sup>4</sup> Exod. xx. Rom. xiii. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. lviii. 2. Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. Mal. iii. 8. Rom. vii. 9. Phil. iii. 6. <sup>6</sup> Jas. ii. 10. <sup>7</sup> Matt. vi. 19, 20. Luke xii. 33; xvi. 2.

iron-handed duty, and a parent with right feelings will come to God with his children in every way, and seek his blessing on them in the beginning of their journey of life. Our children are given to us but for a little time. They are in a world of danger, sin, and woe. They are exposed to temptation on every hand. If God be not their friend, they have no friend that can aid them in the day of adversity, or keep them from the snares of the destroyer. If he is their friend, they have nothing to fear. The proper expression, then, of parental feeling is to come and offer them early to God. A parent should ask only the privilege of doing it. He should seek God's favour as the best inheritance of his children; and if a parent may devote his offspring to God, if he may daily seek his blessing on them by prayer, it is all that he should ask. With proper feelings he will rush to the throne of grace, and daily seek the protection and guidance of God for his children amidst the temptations and snares of an ungodly world, and implore him to be their guide when the parent shall be laid in the silent grave.

So, children who have been devoted to God, who have been the daily objects of a father's prayers and a mother's tears, who have been again and again presented to Jesus in infancy and childhood, are under the most sacred obligations to live to God. They should never forget that a parent sought the favour of God as the chief blessing, and having been offered to

Jesus by prayer and baptism in their first days on earth, they should make it their great aim to be prepared to meet him when he shall come in the clouds of heaven.

17—31. See this passage illustrated in Matt. xix. 16—30.

17. *Gone forth.* From the place where he had been teaching. ¶ *Into the way.* Into the road or path on his journey. ¶ *Running.* Thus showing the intensity with which he desired to know the way of life. Zeal to know the way to be saved is proper, nor is it possible to be too intense if well directed. Nothing else is so important, and nothing demands, therefore, so much effort and haste.

19. *Defraud not.* Do not take away your neighbour's property by fraud or dishonesty. To cheat or defraud supposes a covetous desire of a neighbour's property, and is usually attended with falsehood or false witness against a neighbour in obtaining it. It is thus a violation of the ninth and tenth commandments, and our Saviour very properly, therefore, condensed the two, and expressed their substance in this, not to defraud. It is, besides, expressly forbidden in Lev. xix. 13, "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour."

21. *Jesus—loved him.* What occurred afterwards showed that the young man did not love the Saviour or was not a true disciple. So that this expression denotes simply, natural affection, or means that Jesus was pleased with his amiableness,

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 ¶ And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust<sup>1</sup> in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxi. 24. Psa. lli. 7: lxli. 10. Hab. ii. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Rev. lli. 17.

his morality, and his external regard for the law of God. At the same time, this was entirely consistent with deep sorrow that he would not give his heart to God, and with deep abhorrence of such a love of the world as to blind the mind to the reality of true religion, and to lead to the rejection of the Messiah, and the destruction of the soul. ¶ *One thing thou lackest.* When the young man came to Jesus, he asked him, "What lack I yet?" Matt. xix. 20. This question Mark has omitted, but he has retained the answer. The answer means, there is one thing yet wanting. Though all that you have said should be true, yet, to make the system complete, or to show that you really are disposed to keep the commands of God, go and sell your property. See whether you love God more than you do your wealth. By doing that you will show that your love of God is supreme, that your obedience is not merely external and formal, but sincere and real, the thing now lacking, will be made up.

24. *Children.* An expression of affection, perhaps also implying a reproof that their slowness of understanding was like children. When they should have seen at once the truth of what he said, they were slow to learn it. It became neces-

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for<sup>2</sup> with God all things are possible.

28 ¶ Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you,<sup>3</sup> there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses,

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xviii. 14. Job xlii. 2. Jer. xxxii. 17. Luke i. 37. <sup>3</sup> Gen. xii. 1—3. Deut. xxxiii. 9—11. Heb. xi. 24—26.

sary, therefore, to repeat what he had said. ¶ *How hard.* With how much difficulty. 26. *Out of measure.* Very much, or exceedingly. The Greek means no more than this.

30. *An hundred fold.* A hundred times as much. ¶ *In this time.* In this life. In the time that he forsakes all. ¶ *Houses, &c.* This cannot be taken literally, as promising a hundred times as many *mothers, sisters, &c.* It means, evidently, that the loss shall be a hundred times compensated or made up; or that, in the possession of religion, we have a hundred times the value of all that we forsake. This consists in the pardon of sin, in the favour of God, in peace of conscience, in support in trials and in death, and in raising up friends in the place of those who are left—spiritual brethren, and sisters, and mothers, &c. And this corresponds to the experience of all who ever became Christians. At the same time it is true that godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that is, as well as of that which is to come. The favour of God is the security for every blessing. Obedience to his law secures industry, temperance, chastity, economy, prudence, health, and the confidence of the world—all indispensable to success in life, and all connected, commonly, with success. Though

and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

31 But <sup>1</sup> many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

32 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33 *Saying*, Behold we <sup>3</sup> go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:

34 And <sup>4</sup> they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

35 ¶ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx. 16. Luke xiii. 30. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xx. 17—19. Luke xviii. 31—34. <sup>3</sup> Acts xx. 22. <sup>4</sup> Psa. xxii. 6, 7, 13.

the wicked sometimes prosper, yet the surest way of prosperity is to fear God and keep his commandments. Thus will all needed blessings descend on us here, and eternal blessings hereafter. ¶ *With persecutions.* Persecutions, or the contempt of the world, and bodily sufferings on account of their religion, they must meet. Jesus did not conceal this. But he consoled them. He assured them that amidst these, or perhaps it should be rendered “after” these, they should find friends and comfort. It is well to bear trial if God be our friend. With the promises of the Bible in our hand, we may

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye <sup>5</sup> know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism <sup>6</sup> that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye <sup>7</sup> shall indeed drink of the cup <sup>8</sup> that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared. <sup>9</sup>

41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye <sup>10</sup> know that they which are <sup>11</sup> accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

<sup>5</sup> Jas. iv. 3. <sup>6</sup> Luke xii. 80. <sup>7</sup> Matt. x. 25. John xvii. 14. <sup>8</sup> Ch. xiv. 36. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xxv. 34. Heb. xi. 16. <sup>10</sup> Luke xxii. 25. <sup>11</sup> Or, think good.

hail persecutions, and thank God that, amidst so many sorrows, he has furnished such superabundant consolations.

32—34. See Matt. xx. 17—19.

32. *Jesus went before them.* In the manner of an intrepid, fearless leader and guide, exposing himself to danger and death rather than his followers. ¶ *And they were amazed, &c.* They were afraid that evil would befall him in the city; that the scribes and Pharisees, who had so often sought to kill him, would then do it. Their fear and amazement were increased when he told them what would befall him there. They were

43 But so shall it not be among you : but <sup>1</sup> whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister :

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but <sup>2</sup> to minister, and to <sup>3</sup> give his life a ransom for many.

46 ¶ And <sup>4</sup> they came to Jericho : and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace : but he cried the more <sup>5</sup> a great deal, *Thou Son of David, have mercy* <sup>6</sup> on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 35. Matt. xx. 26, 28. Luke ix. 48.  
<sup>2</sup> John xiii. 14. Phil. ii. 7. <sup>3</sup> Isa. lili. 11,  
 12. Dan. ix. 26. <sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13.  
<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 6. Tit. ii. 14. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xx. 29-34.  
 Luke xviii. 35-43. <sup>7</sup> Jer. xxix. 13. <sup>8</sup> Psa.  
 lail. 12.

amazed that, when he knew so well what would happen, he should still persevere in going up to the city.

35-45. See Notes on Matt. xx. 20-28.

36. And James and John, came unto him. They did this through the instrumentality of their mother. They did not come in person, but they got their mother to make the request for them. Compare Matthew.

46-52. See this passage explained in Notes on Matt. xx. 29-34.

46. Blind Bartimæus. Matthew says there were two. Mark mentions but one, though he does not deny that there was another. He mentions this man because he was well known, Bartimæus, the blind man.

50. Casting away his garment. That

unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he <sup>7</sup> calleth thee.

50 And he, casting <sup>8</sup> away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy <sup>9</sup> faith hath <sup>10</sup> made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, 1-11. The fig-tree withered, 12-14; 20, 21. The temple cleansed, 15-19. Faith in God urged, and mutual forgiveness, 22-26. The authority of Jesus questioned, 27-33.*

AND <sup>11</sup> when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you : and as soon as ye be entered

<sup>7</sup> John xi. 28. <sup>8</sup> Phil. iii. 7-9. <sup>9</sup> Ch.  
 v. 34. Matt. ix. 22. <sup>10</sup> Or, saved thee.  
<sup>11</sup> Matt. xxi. 1-11. Luke xix. 29-40. John  
 xli. 14-19.

is, his outer garment ; the one that was thrown loosely over him. See Matt. v. 40. He threw it off full of joy at the prospect of being healed, and that he might run without impediment to Jesus. This may be used to illustrate—though it had no such original reference—the manner in which a sinner should come to Jesus. He should throw away the garments of his own righteousness, he should rise speedily, should run with joy, should have full faith in the power of Jesus, and cast himself entirely upon his mercy.

## CHAPTER XI.

1-11. See this passage illustrated in Matt. xxi. 1-16.



into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need <sup>1</sup> of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and <sup>2</sup> he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed *them* in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed <sup>3</sup> is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxiv. 1. Acts x. 36; xvii. 25. <sup>2</sup> Cor. viii. 9. Heb. ii. 7-9. <sup>3</sup> Zech. ix. 9. <sup>4</sup> Psa. cxviii. 26.

4. *Two ways met.* Cross roads. A public place, probably near the centre of the village.

5. *What do ye, loosing the colt?* Or, why do ye do this? What authority have you for doing it?

11-26. See this passage explained in Notes on Matt. xxi. 18-22.

11. *Into the temple.* Not into the edifice properly called the temple, but into the courts which surrounded the principal edifice. Our Saviour not being of the tribe of Levi, was not permitted to enter into the holy or most holy place. And when, therefore, it is said that he went into the temple, it is always to be understood of the courts surrounding the temple. See Matt. xxi. 12. And when he had looked round about upon all. Having

10 Blessed *be* the kingdom <sup>4</sup> of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. <sup>5</sup>

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and <sup>6</sup> when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the even tide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

12 ¶ And <sup>7</sup> on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

13 And seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing <sup>8</sup> but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

15 ¶ And <sup>9</sup> they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-

<sup>4</sup> Isa. ix. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 15. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxviii. 1. <sup>6</sup> Zeph. i. 12. Ezek. viii. 9. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xxi. 18-22. <sup>8</sup> Isa. v. 7. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xxi. 12-14. Luke xix. 45-48. John ii. 14-17.

seen or examined everything. He saw the abominations and abuses which he afterwards corrected. It may be wondered at that he did not at once correct them, instead of waiting to another day. But it may be observed that God is slow to anger, that he does not at once smite the guilty, but waits patiently before he rebukes and chastises. ¶ *The eventide.* The evening; the time after three o'clock. It is very probable that this was before sunset. The religious services of the temple closed without the offering of the evening sacrifice, at three o'clock, and Jesus probably soon left the city.

13, 14. *Afar off.* See Notes on Matt. xxi. 19.

15-19. See Matt. xxi. 12-15.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Jerusalem.*

, <sup>1</sup> and the seats of them doves;

and would not suffer that should carry *any* vessel the temple.

and he taught, saying unto it not written, <sup>2</sup> My house called <sup>3</sup> of all nations the prayer? but ye have made of thieves.

and the scribes and chief heard it, and sought how to destroy him; for they knew, because all the people were astonished <sup>4</sup> at his doctrine.

and when even was come, out of the city.

And in the morning, as directed by, they saw the fig-tree up from the roots.

and Peter calling to remember saith unto him, Master, the fig-tree which thou hast withered away.

v. 25, 26. <sup>2</sup> Isa. lvi. 7. <sup>3</sup> Or, *prayer for all nations.* <sup>4</sup> Jer. vii. 11. Matt. vii. 28. Luke iv. 32.

*any vessel.* Any vessel used in or connected with the sale of goods of merchandise.

*the people was astonished.* The people were astonished. The people were so popular among them. They saw that their authority was destroyed. They were therefore of him, and sought his life. *doctrine.* His teaching. He taught with authority so great that the Jews were awed, and were obedient.

*as cursedst.* To curse means to destroy. This is its meaning does not, in this place, imply simply that it should be de-

*no faith in God.* Literally, *faith of God.* This may mean no faith, or have confidence in strong belief that he is able to do with infinite ease things that seem difficult, as the fig-tree was withered away by a word.

22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, <sup>6</sup> Have faith in God.

23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever <sup>7</sup> shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, What <sup>8</sup> things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, <sup>9</sup> if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But <sup>10</sup> if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 ¶ And they come again to

<sup>6</sup> Or, *Have the faith of God.* <sup>7</sup> Matt. xvii. 20. Luke xvii. 6. <sup>8</sup> Matt. vii. 7. Luke xi. 9; xviii. 1. John xiv. 13; xv. 7; xvi. 24. Jan. 1. 5, 6. <sup>9</sup> Matt. vi. 14. Col. iii. 13. <sup>10</sup> Matt. xviii. 35.

25. *And when ye stand praying.* When ye pray. It seems that the posture in prayer was sometimes standing and sometimes kneeling. God looks upon the heart rather than upon our position in worship; and if the heart be right, any posture may be proper. It cannot be doubted, however, that in private, in the family, and wherever it can be conveniently done, the kneeling posture is more proper, as expressing more humility and reverence, and as more in accordance with scripture examples. Comp. 2 Chron. vi. 13. Ps. xcv. 6. Dan. vi. 10. Luke xxii. 41. Acts vii. 60; ix. 40. Yet a subject like this may be regarded as of too much consequence, and we should be careful that anxiety about a mere form should not exclude anxiety about a far more important matter, the state of the soul. ¶ *Forgive, &c.* See Note on Matt. vi. 12, 15.

27—33. See Notes on Matt. xxi. 23—27.

Jerusalem : and <sup>1</sup> as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By <sup>2</sup> what authority doest thou these things ? and who gave thee this authority to do these things ?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one <sup>3</sup> question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men ? answer me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven ; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him ?

32 But if we shall say, Of men ; they feared the people : for <sup>4</sup> all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We <sup>5</sup> cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I <sup>6</sup> tell you by what authority I do these things.

## CHAPTER XII.

*The faithless vine-dressers, 1—12. Attempts to entrap Jesus—The tribute money, 13—17. The resurrection, 18—27. The lawyer's question, 28—34. Christ David's son, 35—37. Scribes denounced 38—40. The widow's gift, 41—44.*

AND he began to speak unto them by parables. A <sup>7</sup> certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

2 And at the season he sent to

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxi. 23—27. Luke xx. 1—8. <sup>2</sup> Num. xvi. 3. <sup>3</sup> Or, thing. <sup>4</sup> Ch. vi. 20. Matt. iii. 4, 6 : xiv. 5. <sup>5</sup> Isa. i. 3 ; xxix. 14. Jer. viii. 7. Hos. iv. 6. <sup>6</sup> Luke x. 21, 22. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xxi. 33—40 Luke xx. 9—18.

the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the <sup>8</sup> fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant ; and at him they cast stones, <sup>9</sup> and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.

5 And again he sent another ; and him they killed, and <sup>10</sup> many others ; beating some, and killing <sup>11</sup> some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he <sup>12</sup> sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir ; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out <sup>13</sup> of the vineyard.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do ? he will come and <sup>14</sup> destroy the husbandmen, and will <sup>15</sup> give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture ; The <sup>16</sup> stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner :

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes ?

12 And <sup>17</sup> they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people ; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them : and they left him, and went their way.

13 ¶ And <sup>18</sup> they sent unto him

<sup>8</sup> Cant. viii. 11. Mic. vii. 1. Luke xii. 48. John xv. 1—8. <sup>9</sup> Heb. xi. 37. <sup>10</sup> Neh. ix. 30. Jer. vii. 25—28. <sup>11</sup> Matt. xxiii. 37. <sup>12</sup> Heb. i. 1, 2. <sup>13</sup> Heb. xiii. 12. <sup>14</sup> Prov. i. 24—31. Isa. v. 5—7. Dan. ix. 26. <sup>15</sup> Jer. xvii. 3. <sup>16</sup> Psa. cxviii. 22. <sup>17</sup> Ch. xi. 18. John vii. 30. <sup>18</sup> Matt. xxi. 15. Luke xx. 20—26.

certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? Bring me a <sup>1</sup> penny, that I may see it.

16 And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.

17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar <sup>2</sup> the things that are Cæsar's, and to God <sup>3</sup> the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 ¶ Then <sup>4</sup> come unto him the Sadducees, which say <sup>5</sup> there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, Moses wrote <sup>6</sup> unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother <sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vaine in our money sevenpence halfpenny, as Matt. xxii. 10. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xvii. 25—27. Rom. xiii. 7. <sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 17. <sup>4</sup> Ecc. v. 4, 5. Mal. i. 6. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxii. 23. Luke xx. 27—33. <sup>6</sup> Acts xiii. 8. <sup>7</sup> Deut. xxv. 5. <sup>8</sup> Ruth i. 11, 13.

## CHAPTER XII.

1—12. See this parable explained in Matt. xxi. 33—46.

13—17. See Matt. xxii. 15—22.

18—27. See this passage fully explained in Matt. xxii. 23—33.

28. *Are as the angels.* That is, as the angels in respect to connexions and relations. What that may be we know not, but this passage teaches that the peculiar relation of marriage will not exist. It does not affirm, however, that there will be no recollection of former marriages, or

should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but <sup>8</sup> are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, <sup>9</sup> I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye <sup>10</sup> therefore do greatly err.

28 ¶ And <sup>11</sup> one of the scribes came, and having heard them rea-

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 42—53. <sup>9</sup> Exod. iii. 6. <sup>10</sup> Ver. 24. <sup>11</sup> Matt. xxii. 35—40.

no recognition of each other as having existed in this tender relation.

26. *How in the bush.* At the burning bush. See Exod. iii. 6. In that part of the book of Exodus which contains the account of the burning bush. When there were no chapters and verses, it was the easiest way of quoting a book of the Old Testament by the subject, and in this way quotations were often made by the Jews.

28—34. See Matt. xxii. 34—40.

28. *Perceiving that he answered them*

soning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is,<sup>1</sup> Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord:

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

31 And the second is like, *namely* this, Thou<sup>2</sup> shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and<sup>3</sup> there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the

<sup>1</sup> Deut. vi. 4, 5. Luke x. 27. <sup>2</sup> Lev. xix. 18. Matt. xxii. 39. Rom. xiii. 9. <sup>3</sup> Deut. iv. 39. Isa. xlv. 5, 6, 14; xlv. 9.

*well.* That is, with wisdom, and with a proper understanding of the law. In this case the opinion of the Saviour corresponded with that of the Pharisees; and this question seems to have been one of the very few candid inquiries made of him by the Jews, for the purpose of obtaining information. Jesus answered it in like spirit of kindness, and commended the conduct of the man.

29. *Hear, O Israel!* This was said to call the attention of the Jews to the great importance of the truth about to be proclaimed. See Deut. vi. 4, 5. ¶ *The Lord our God, &c.* Literally, "Jehovah, our God, is one Jehovah." The other nations worshipped many gods, but the God of the Jews was one, and one only. Jehovah was undivided; and this great truth it was the design of the separation of the Jewish people from other nations to keep in mind. This was the peculiar truth which was communicated to the Jews, and this they were required to keep and remember for ever.

30. *And thou shalt love, &c.* If Jehovah was the only God, then they ought not to love any other being supremely.

heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question.*

35 ¶ And<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

36 For David himself said by<sup>5</sup> the Holy Ghost, The<sup>6</sup> LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 22. Hos. vi. 6. Mic. vi. 6-8. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxii. 46. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxii. 41. Luke xx. 41-44. <sup>7</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. <sup>8</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 16. <sup>9</sup> Ps. cx. 1.

Then they might not bow down before any idol. They were required to love God above all other beings or things, and with all the faculties of their minds.

32-34. This answer of the scribe is not found in Matthew. ¶ *Is more than all.* Is of more importance and value. ¶ *Discreetly.* Wisely, according to truth. ¶ *Not far from the kingdom of God.* Thou who dost prefer the internal to the external worship of God, who hast so just a view of the requirements of the law, canst easily become a follower of me, and art almost fit to be numbered among my disciples. This shows that a proper understanding of the Old Testament, of its laws and requirements, would prepare the mind for Christianity, and fit a man at once to embrace it when presented. Our system is grafted on the other, agreeably to Gal. iii. 24. ¶ *No man durst ask him any question.* That is, no one of the scribes, the Pharisees, or the Sadducees, durst ask him a question for the purpose of tempting him, or entangling him. He had completely silenced them. His disciples dared to ask him questions for the purpose of information.

37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 ¶ And he said unto them <sup>1</sup> in his doctrine, Beware <sup>2</sup> of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and *love* salutations in the market-places,

39 And <sup>3</sup> the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iv. 2. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiii. 1. Luke xx. 46, 47. <sup>3</sup> Luke xi. 43. <sup>4</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 6.

35—37. See Matt. xxii. 41—46.

37. *The common people heard him gladly.* The success of our Saviour in his preaching was chiefly among the common or the poorer class of people. The rich and the mighty were too proud to listen to his instructions. So it is still. The chief success of the gospel is there, and there it pours down its chief blessings. This is not the fault of the gospel. It would bless the rich and the mighty as well as the poor, if they came with like humble hearts. God knows no distinctions of men in conferring his favours; and wherever there is a poor, contrite, and humble spirit, be the clothing rags or purple, be it on a throne or a dunghill, there he confers the blessings of salvation.

38. *In his doctrine.* In his teaching, for so it should be rendered. ¶ *Beware of the scribes.* Be on your guard. Be cautious about hearing them or following them. ¶ *Scribes.* The learned men of the Jewish nation. ¶ *Which love to go in long clothing.* In long flowing robes, as significant of their consequence, leisure, and learning. ¶ *Salutations, &c.* See Matt. xxiii. 6, 7.

40. *Which devour widows' houses.* Which devour the families of widows, or the means of supporting their families. This they did under pretence of counselling them in the knowledge of the law, and in the management of their estates. They took advantage of their ignorance and unprotected state, and either extorted large sums for their counsel, or perverted the property to their own use. No wonder

prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41 ¶ And <sup>5</sup> Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money <sup>6</sup> into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two <sup>7</sup> mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That <sup>8</sup> this poor

<sup>5</sup> Luke xxi. 1—4. <sup>6</sup> A piece of brass money: see Matt. x. 9. <sup>7</sup> 7th part of that piece of brass money. <sup>8</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 2, 12.

that our Saviour denounced them! If there is any sin of peculiar enormity, it is thus taking advantage of the circumstances of the poor, the needy, and the helpless, and wronging them out of the pittance on which they depend to support their families. And as God is the friend of the widow and the fatherless, it may be expected that such will be visited with heavy condemnation. ¶ *For a pretence.* For show, or pretending great devotion.

41. *Sat over against.* Opposite to, in full sight of. ¶ *The treasury.* This was in the court of the women. See Matt. xxi. 12. In that court there were fixed a number of coffers, made with a large open mouth in the shape of a trumpet, for the purpose of receiving the offerings of the people; and the money thus contributed was devoted to the service of the temple, to incense, sacrifices, &c.

42. *Two mites.* The word translated *mite* denotes a small coin made of brass, the smallest in use among the Jews. The precise value cannot now be easily estimated. It was much less than any coin we have; the farthing was less than the English farthing.

43. *This poor widow hath cast more in, &c.* That is, more in proportion to her means, and therefore more that was acceptable to God. He does not mean that this was more in value than all which the others had put in, but it showed more love to the sacred cause, more self-denial, and of course more sincerity in what she did. This is the rule by which God will reward us. Compare 2 Cor. viii. 12.

widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; <sup>1</sup> but *she* of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* <sup>2</sup> all her living.

### CHAPTER XIII.

*Overthrow of the temple foretold, 1, 2.*

*Signs of the approach of this event.—*

*False Messiahs, 5—8. Persecutions,*

*9—13. Army near, 14—23. Signs*

*in the air, 24—31. Disciples to watch,*

*32—37.*

**A**ND <sup>3</sup> as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. xlix. 3, 17. <sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. xlv. 10. <sup>3</sup> Deut. xxiv. 6. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiv. 1—28. Luke xxi. 5—24.

44. *Of their abundances.* Of their superfluous store. They have given what they did not need. They could afford well all they gave, and in giving it showed no self-denial. ¶ *She of her want.* Of her poverty. ¶ *All her living.* All that she had to live on. She trusted in God to supply her wants, and devoted her little property entirely to him.

From this passage we may learn: 1. That God is pleased with offerings made to him and his cause. 2. That it is our duty to devote our property to God. We received it from him; and we shall not employ it in a proper manner unless we feel that we are stewards, and ask of him what we shall do with it. Jesus approved the conduct of all who had given money to the treasury. 3. That the highest evidence of love to the cause of religion is not the amount given, but the amount compared with our means. 4. That it may be proper to give all our property to God, and to depend on his providence for the supply of our wants. 5. That God does not despise the humblest offering, if it be made in sincerity. He loves a cheerful giver. 6. That there are none who may not in this way show their love to the cause of religion. There are few, very few scholars in all our sabbath schools, who may not give as much to the cause of religion as this poor widow; and Jesus would be as ready to

manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*

2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? <sup>4</sup> there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus answering them began to say, Take <sup>5</sup> heed lest any man deceive you:

<sup>4</sup> Luke xix. 44. <sup>5</sup> Jer. xxix. 8. Eph. v. 6. 2 Thess. ii. 3. Rev. xx. 7, 8.

approve their offerings as he was here, and the time to begin to be benevolent and to do good is in early life, in childhood. 7. That it is every man's duty to make inquiry, not how much he gives, but how much compared with what he has; how much self-denial he practises, and what is the motive with which he gives. 8. We may remark that few practise self-denial for the purposes of charity. Most give of their abundance, that is, what they can spare without feeling it, and many feel that this is the same as throwing it away. Among all the thousands who give to these objects, how few deny themselves of one comfort, even the least, that they may advance the kingdom of Christ!

### CHAPTER XIII.

The principal things in this chapter are fully explained in Matt. xxiv.

1. *What manner of stones.* The stones here referred to were those used in the building of the temple, and the walls on the sides of Mount Moriah on which the temple stood. The temple was constructed of white marble, and the blocks were of a prodigious size. Josephus says that these stones were some of them fifty feet long, twenty-four broad, and sixteen thick.

3. *On the mount of Olives, over against the temple.* The mount of Olives was

6 For many shall come <sup>1</sup> in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be <sup>2</sup> ye not troubled: for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall not be yet*.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of <sup>3</sup> sorrows.

9 ¶ But take heed to yourselves: for they <sup>4</sup> shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

10 And <sup>5</sup> the gospel must first be published among all nations.

<sup>1</sup> Acts v. 36-39. <sup>2</sup> 1 John iv. 1. <sup>3</sup> Psal. xxvii. 3; xlii. 1. <sup>4</sup> Prov. iii. 25. John xiv. 1, 27. <sup>5</sup> The word in the original importeth *the pains of a woman in travail*. <sup>6</sup> Matt. x. 17-30. Rev. ii. 10. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19. Rev. xiv. 6.

directly east of Jerusalem, and from it there was a fine view of the temple.

9. *Take heed to yourselves.* Be cautious that no man deceive you; or, take care of your lives; do not run into unnecessary danger. ¶ *To councils.* The higher ecclesiastical courts of the Jews, including the sanhedrim, or great council of the nation. ¶ *Rulers and kings.* Referring to Roman officers. *For a testimony against them.* Rather to bear testimony to them; or to be witnesses before them of the truth. This was for the sake of Jesus, or because they were attached to him; and God would overrule it so that at the same time they should bear witness to the rulers of the truth, as was the case with Peter and John, Acts iv.; with Stephen, Acts vi. vii.; and with Paul, Acts xxiii. xxiv. 24, 25.

11. *Neither do ye premeditate.* Do not think beforehand, or prepare an answer. You know not what the accusations will be; and God will furnish you

11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but <sup>6</sup> the Holy Ghost.

12 Now the brother <sup>7</sup> shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 And ye shall be hated <sup>8</sup> of all men for my name's sake: but he <sup>9</sup> that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 ¶ But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of <sup>10</sup> by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judæa flee to the mountains:

<sup>6</sup> Acts ii. 4; iv. 8, 31; vi. 10. <sup>7</sup> Mic. vii. 6. <sup>8</sup> Luke vi. 22. John xvii. 14. <sup>9</sup> Dan. xii. 12. Rev. ii. 10. <sup>10</sup> Dan. ix. 27.

with a reply that shall be adapted to the occasion. ¶ *Not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.* This is a full promise that they should be inspired, and consequently their defences recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, are the words of the Holy Ghost. There could be no more explicit promise that they should be under an infallible guidance; and we are not left to doubt that they were taught of God. At the same time this was a most desirable and gracious aid. They were illiterate, unknown, without power. They were unfit of themselves to make the important statements of religion which were requisite. But God gave them power, and they spake with a wisdom, fearlessness, pungency, and ability, which no other men have ever manifested; full proof that these illiterate fishermen were under the influence of the Holy Ghost.

12. *The brother shall betray, &c.* The brother shall give up in a treacherous



15 And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take anything out of his house :

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days !

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

19 For <sup>1</sup> in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved : but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 And then if any man shall say to you, *Lo,* <sup>2</sup> here is Christ ; or, *lo, he is there* ; believe *him* not :

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were possible*, even the elect.

23 But <sup>3</sup> take ye heed : behold, I have foretold you all things.

24 ¶ But in those days, after

<sup>1</sup> Dan. xii. 1. Joel ii. 2.    <sup>2</sup> Luke xvii. 23.  
<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 17.

manner his brother to be put to death, on account of his attachment to Jesus. Through fear, in the hope of reward and the hatred of the gospel, he will overcome all the natural ties of brotherhood, and give up his own kindred to be burnt or crucified. Perhaps nothing could more clearly show the dreadful evil of those times, as well as the natural opposition of the heart to the religion of Christ.

15. *On the house-top.* See Matt. ix. 1—3.

32. *Neither the Son.* This text has always presented serious difficulties. It has been asked, if Jesus had a divine nature,

that tribulation, <sup>4</sup> the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall ~~not~~ give her light,

25 And <sup>5</sup> the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 And <sup>6</sup> then shall they see the Son of man coming in the cloud with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree ; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near :

29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even at the doors.*

30 Verily I say unto you, *that* this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away : but <sup>7</sup> my words shall not pass away.

32 ¶ But of that day and *the*

<sup>4</sup> Dan. xii. 1. Zeph. i. 15—17.    <sup>5</sup> Isa. xlii. 10 ; xxiv. 20, 23. Jer. iv. 28.    <sup>6</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12. Rev. vi. 12—14 ; xx. 11.    <sup>7</sup> Ch. xiv. 62. Dan. vii. 9—14. Matt. xvi. 27 ; xxiv. 30 Acts i. 11. 1 Thess. iv. 16.    <sup>8</sup> 2 Thess. i. 7, 10 Rev. i. 7.    <sup>9</sup> Isa. xl. 8.

how could he say he knew not the day and hour of a future event ? In reply, it has been said that the passage was wanting, according to Ambrose, in some Greek manuscripts. But it is now found in all, and there can be little doubt that the passage is genuine. Others have said that the verb rendered *knoweth*, means sometimes to make known, or to reveal, and that the passage means, that day and hour now makes known, neither the angels, nor the Son, but the Father. It is true the word has sometimes that meaning, as in 1 Cor. ii. 2, but then it is natural to ask where has the Father made it known. In what

hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take <sup>1</sup> ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 *For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.*

35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at mid-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv. 42; xxv. 13. Luke xii. 40; xxi. 34. Rom. xiii. 11, 12. 1 Thess. v. 6. Rev. xvi. 15.

place did he reveal it? After all, the passage has no more difficulty than that in Luke ii. 52, where it is said that Jesus increased in wisdom and stature. He had a human nature. He grew as a man in knowledge. As a man, his knowledge must be finite, for the faculties of the human soul are not infinite. As a man he often spoke, reasoned, inquired, felt, feared, read, learned, ate, drank, and walked. Why are not all these, which imply that he was a man, that, as a man, he was not infinite, why are not these as difficult as the want of knowledge respecting the particular time of a future event, especially when that time must be made known by God, and when he chose that the man, Christ Jesus, should grow and think, and speak as a man?

34. *Who left his house.* The word *house* often means family. Our Saviour here represents himself as going away, leaving his household the church, assigning to the apostles, and all his servants their duty, and leaving it uncertain when he would return. As his return was a matter of vast consequence, and as the affairs of his kingdom were entrusted to them, just as the affairs of a house are to servants when the master is absent: so it was of vast importance that they should be faithful at their post, defend the house from danger, and be ready for his return. ¶ *The porter.* The door-keeper. To the janitor, or door-keeper, was entrusted, particularly, the faithful care of the house; it was his duty to attend faithfully on

night, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. <sup>2</sup>

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch. <sup>3</sup>

#### CHAPTER XIV.

*Conspiracy against Jesus, 1, 2. Jesus anointed, 3—9. Judas agrees to betray Jesus, 10, 11. Christ celebrates his last passover, foretells Judas's treason, and institutes the supper, 12—26. Foretells Peter's denial, 27—31. Agony in Gethsemane, 32—42. Christ betrayed and taken, 43—52. Jesus in the high priest's court, and denied by Peter, 53—72.*

**A**FTER two days was the feast

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxv. 5. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 33, 35.

those who came, and those who left the house.

35. *Watch ye.* Be diligent, faithful, and waiting for the return of your Lord who will come at an unexpected hour. ¶ *Master of the house.* Denoting here the Lord Jesus. ¶ *At even, or at midnight, or, &c.* This refers to the four divisions into which the Jews divided the night.

36. *Find you sleeping.* Inattentive to your post, neglecting your duty, and unprepared for his coming.

37. *All, Watch.* This command was proper, not only for those who were expecting the calamities that were soon to come upon the Jews, but for all who are soon to die, and to go to the judgment. We know not the time of our death. We know not how soon we shall be called to the judgment. The Son of man may come at any moment, and we should, therefore, be ready. If we are his friends, if we have been renewed and pardoned, if we have repented of our sins, and have believed on him and are leading a holy life, we are ready. If not, we are unprepared, and soon, probably while we are not expecting it, the cold hand of death will be laid on us, and we shall be hurried to the place where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. O how important it is to be ready, and to escape the awful sufferings of an eternal hell!

#### CHAPTER XIV.

1—11. See this passage explained in Matt. xxvi. 1—16.

of the passover, and of unleavened bread; and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

2 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people.<sup>1</sup>

3 ¶ And<sup>2</sup> being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of<sup>3</sup> spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred<sup>4</sup> pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone;

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xix. 21. <sup>2</sup> xxi. 30. <sup>3</sup> Lam. iii. 37. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvi. 6—13. Luke vii. 37-50 John xii. 1—9. <sup>5</sup> Or, *pure nard*; or, *liquid nard*. <sup>6</sup> See Matt. xviii. 28.

1. *And of unleavened bread.* So called because that at that feast no other bread was used but that which had been made without leaven or yeast. ¶ *By craft.* By subtlety, Matthew says; that is, by some secret plan that would secure possession of him without exciting the opposition of the people.

3. *Ointment.* This word does not convey quite the proper meaning. This was a perfume, it was used only to give a pleasant odour, and was liquid. ¶ *Of spikenard.* The nard from which this perfume was made, is a plant of the East Indies, with a small slender stalk, and a heavy, thick root. The best perfume is obtained from the root, though the stalk and fruit are used for that purpose. ¶ *And she brake the box.* This may mean no more than that she broke the seal of the box, so that it could be poured out. Boxes of perfumes are often sealed, or made fast with wax, to prevent the perfume from escaping. It was not likely

why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For<sup>5</sup> ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 ¶ And<sup>6</sup> Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray<sup>7</sup> him unto them.

11 And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him<sup>8</sup> money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

12 ¶ And the first day of<sup>9</sup> unleavened bread, when they<sup>10</sup> killed the passover, his disciples said unto

<sup>5</sup> Deut. xv. 11. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvi. 14—16. Luke xxii. 3—6. <sup>7</sup> John xiii. 2. <sup>8</sup> 1 Kin. xxi. 20. Prov. i. 10—16. <sup>9</sup> Exod. xii. 8—10. <sup>10</sup> Or, *sacrificed*.

that she would break the box itself when it was unnecessary, and when the unguent, being liquid, would have been wasted, when it was very precious. Nor from a broken box or phial, could she easily have poured it on his head.

5. *Three hundred pence.* Nearly nine guineas.

8. *She hath done what she could.* She has shown the highest attachment in her power; and it was, as it is now, a sufficient argument against there being any real waste, that it was done for the honour of Christ.

12—16. See Matt. xxvi. 17—19.

12. *They killed the passover.* The pascal lamb, which was slain in keeping the passover. ¶ *Go and prepare.* Go and prepare a lamb, have it roasted, and properly prepared with the usual things to eat with it. ¶ *The city.* The city of Jerusalem. They were now in Bethany, about two miles from the city. ¶ *A man bearing a pitcher of water.* This

him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared, there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 2, 3. Heb. iv. 13. <sup>2</sup> John xi. 28; xiii. 18. <sup>3</sup> Rev. iii. 20. <sup>4</sup> John xvi. 4. <sup>5</sup> Psa. xli. 9; Iv. 13, 14.

could have been known only by the infinite knowledge of Christ. Such a thing could not have been conjectured, nor was there any concert between him and the man, that at that time he should be in a particular place to meet them, for the disciples themselves proposed the inquiry. If Jesus knew a circumstance like that, then he, in the same way, must have known all things. Then he sees all the actions of man, hears every word, and marks every thought. Then the righteous are under his care, and the wicked, much as they may wish to be unseen, cannot escape the notice of his eye.

14. *The good man of the house.* This

20 And he answered and said unto them, *It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.*

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22 ¶ And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 ¶ And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xviii. 6, 7. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26—35. Luke xxii. 19. <sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23—34. <sup>9</sup> John vi. 48—58. <sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16. John vi. 53. <sup>11</sup> Joel iii. 18. Am. ix. 13, 14. <sup>12</sup> Or, *psalm*. <sup>13</sup> Zech. xiii. 7.

signifies simply the master of the house. The original word expresses nothing respecting his character, whether it was good or bad. ¶ *The guest-chamber.* A chamber for guests or friends, an unoccupied room.

15. *A large upper room.* The word used here denotes the upper room devoted to purposes of prayer, repose, and often of eating. See Note, Matt. ix. 1—8. ¶ *Furnished and prepared.* Literally spread and ready. Spread with a carpet, or with couches, such as were used in eating. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6.

17—31. See the passage explained in Matt. xxvi. 20—35.

will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But <sup>1</sup> after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 But <sup>2</sup> Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 And <sup>3</sup> they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto them, My <sup>4</sup> soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 7.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 33, 34.    Luke xxii. 33, 34.    John xiii. 37, 38.    <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvi. 36—46.    Luke xxii. 39—46.    John xviii. 1—14.    <sup>4</sup> John xii. 27.

31. *More vehemently.* More earnestly, more confidently.

32—42. See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 36—46.

36. *Abba.* This word denotes father. It is a Syriac word, and is used by our Saviour as a word denoting filial affection and tenderness. See Rom. viii. 15.

40. *Neither wist they, &c.* Neither knew they. They were so conscious of the impropriety of sleeping at that time, that they could not find any answer to give to the inquiry why they had done it.

41. *It is enough.* There has been much difficulty in determining the meaning of this phrase. Campbell translates it, *all is over*, i. e., the time when you

<sup>5</sup> that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, <sup>6</sup> Abba, Father, all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless <sup>7</sup> not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The <sup>8</sup> spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak.

39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the <sup>9</sup> hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. v. 7.    <sup>6</sup> Rom. viii. 15.    Gal. iv. 6.    <sup>7</sup> Pra. xl. 8.    John iv. 34; v. 30; vi. 38, 39; xviii. 11.    Phil. ii. 8.    <sup>8</sup> Rom. vii. 18—25.    Gal. v. 17.    <sup>9</sup> John vii. 30; viii. 20; xiii. 1.

could have been of service to me is gone by. They might have aided him by watching for him when they were sleeping; but now the time was past, and he was already, as it were, in the hands of his enemies. It is not improbable, however, that after his agony some time elapsed before Judas came. He had required them to watch, i. e., to keep awake during that season of agony. After that, they might have been suffered to sleep, while Jesus watched alone. As he saw Judas approach, he probably roused them, saying, It is sufficient, as much repose has been taken as is allowable, the enemy is near, and the Son of man is about to be betrayed.

43 ¶ And <sup>1</sup> immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude <sup>2</sup> with swords and staves, from the chief priests, <sup>3</sup> and the scribes and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, <sup>4</sup> that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, <sup>5</sup> master; and kissed him.

46 ¶ And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures <sup>6</sup> must be fulfilled.

<sup>7</sup> 50 And <sup>7</sup> they all forsook him, and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him:

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 47. Luke xxii. 47—53. John xviii. 3—14. <sup>2</sup> Psa. lli. 1, 2. <sup>3</sup> Psa. li. 2. <sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. x. 9. Psa. lv. 21. Prov. xxvii. 6. <sup>5</sup> Luke vi. 46. <sup>6</sup> Psa. xxii. Isa. liii. Luke xxiv. 44. <sup>7</sup> Ver. 27. Psa. lxxxviii. 8. Isa. lxiii. 3.

43—52. See Matt. xxvi. 47—56.

45. *Master, master.* As if expressing great joy that he had found him again.

51. *A certain young man.* Who this was we have no means of determining. That he was not one of the apostles is clear. It is probable that he was of one of the neighbouring villages or houses, and

52 And he left <sup>8</sup> the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

53 ¶ And <sup>9</sup> they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none..

56 For <sup>10</sup> many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will <sup>11</sup> destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? <sup>12</sup>

61 But <sup>13</sup> he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto

<sup>8</sup> Ch. xlii. 16. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xxvi. 57—68. Luke xxii. 54—62. John xviii. 13, 14. <sup>10</sup> Psa. xxxv. 11. <sup>11</sup> Ch. xv. 28. John ii. 19. <sup>12</sup> Matt. xxvi. 62—68. <sup>13</sup> Psa. xxxix. 9. Isa. liii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 23.

was roused from sleep by the noise made by the rabble, and came to see what was doing; nor is it known why this circumstance is recorded by Mark. It is omitted by all the other evangelists. It may have been recorded to show that the conspirators had instructions to take the apostles, as well as Jesus; and supposing him to be one of them,

men. Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent his robes, and said, What need we any further witnesses?

64 He have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, *Prophesy*: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 ¶ And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.

<sup>1</sup> Dan. vii. 13. Matt. xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64. Luke xxi. 69. Rev. i. 7. <sup>2</sup> Isa. xxxvii. 1. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xv. 19. Isa. i. 6. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvi. 62—75. Luke xxi. 55—62. John xviii. 16—18. <sup>5</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 12.

they did hold of him to take him before the high priest. ¶ A linen cloth cast about his naked body. He was roused from sleep, and probably threw around him what was most convenient. They slept in linen bed-clothes commonly, and he seized a part of the clothes, and hastily threw it round him. ¶ The young men. The Roman soldiers. They were called young men because they were made up

70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilee, and thy speech agreeth thereto.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.<sup>6</sup>

## CHAPTER XV.

Jesus in Pilate's court, 1—14. *Reveries professed by the people to Jesus*, 15—18. *Jesus mocked*, 16—20. *Crucified in Calvary*, 21—32. *Death of Jesus*, 33—41. *Christ buried*, 42—47.

AND straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation<sup>9</sup> with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

<sup>6</sup> Acts ii. 7. <sup>7</sup> Or, he wept abundantly; or, he began to weep. <sup>8</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 10. <sup>9</sup> *See* ii. 2. Matt. xxvii. 1—12. Luke xxiii. 1—7. John xviii. 28—40. Acts. ii. 13; iv. 38.

chiefly of youth originally. This was a Jewish mode of speaking. See Gen. xiv. 24. 2 Sam. ii. 14. Isa. xiii. 18. ¶ *Laid hold on him*. Supposing him to be one of the apostles.

51—72. See this fully explained in Matt. xxvi. 57—75.

## CHAPTER XV.

See the principal events in this chapter explained in Matt. xxvii.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 But <sup>1</sup> Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now <sup>2</sup> at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.<sup>3</sup>

11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release <sup>4</sup> Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King <sup>5</sup> of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil <sup>6</sup> hath he done?

And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 ¶ And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

16 And <sup>7</sup> the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Prætorium; and they call together the whole band.

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,

18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit <sup>8</sup> upon him, and, bowing their knees worshipped him.

20 And when they had mocked <sup>9</sup> him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 And <sup>10</sup> they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave him to drink

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 7. John xix. 9. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii. 15. Luke xxiii. 17. John xviii. 39. <sup>3</sup> Prov. xxvii. 4. Eccl. iv. 4. Acts xiii. 45. Tit. iii. 3. <sup>4</sup> Acts iii. 14. <sup>5</sup> Isa. li. 6. Jer. xxiii. 5. Acts v. 31. <sup>6</sup> Isa. liii. 9.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxvii. 27. John xviii. 28, 33; xix. 9. <sup>8</sup> Ch. xiv. 65. <sup>9</sup> Ch. x. 34. Job xlii. 9. Ps. xxxv. 16. Matt. xx. 19. Luke xxii. 63; xxiii. 11, 36. <sup>10</sup> Matt. xxvii. 33, 38. Luke xxiii. 33, 36. John xix. 17—22.

16. *Called Prætorium.* The hall of the prætor, or Roman governor, where he sat to administer justice. ¶ *Whole band.* See Note on Matt. xxvii. 27.

17. *With purple.* Matthew says scarlet. See note on Matt. xxvii. 28. ¶ *About his head.* In the form of a garland, or diadem. The whole head was not covered, but it was placed in a circle round the temples.

19. *Worshipped him.* Mocked him

with the appearance of homage. The word *worship* here denotes only the respect and honour done to princes and kings. It does not refer to any religious homage. They regarded him as foolishly and madly claiming to be a king, not as claiming to be divine.

23. *Wine mingled, &c.* Matthew says vinegar. It was probably wine soured, so that it might be called either. This was the common drink of the Roman soldiers.



wine mingled with myrrh : but he received it not.

24 And when they had crucified him, they<sup>1</sup> parted his garments,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxii. 18. Matt. xxvii. 35. John xix. 23, 24.

¶ Myrrh. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 34.

25. And it was the third hour, &c. In John xix. 14, it is said, "and it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour," &c. Much difficulty has been felt in reconciling these passages; and infidels have usually adduced them to prove that the evangelists have contradicted themselves. In reconciling them the following remarks may perhaps make the matter clear. 1. The Jews divided both the night and the day into four equal parts of three hours each. See Note, Matt. xiv. 25. The first division of the day commenced at six o'clock in the morning, and ended at nine; the second commenced at nine and ended at twelve, &c. The third hour mentioned by Mark would therefore correspond with our nine o'clock; the sixth hour mentioned by John would correspond with our twelve, or noon. 2. Mark professes to give the time accurately; John does not. He says, "it was about the sixth hour," without affirming that this was exactly the time. 3. A mistake in numbers is easily made; and if it should be admitted that such an error had crept into the text here, it would be nothing more than has occurred in many ancient writings. It has been proved moreover, that it was common not to write the words indicating numbers at length, but to use letters. The Greeks designated numbers by the letters of the alphabet; and this mode of computation is found in ancient manuscripts. For example, the Cambridge MS. of the New Testament has in this very place in Mark not the word third written at length, but the letter γ, the usual notation for third. Now it is well known that it would be easy to mistake this for the mark denoting six, c. All error of this kind in an early MS. might be extensively propagated, and might have led to the present reading of the text. Such an error is actually known to exist in the Chronicon of Paschal, where (who is said to have reigned c six months; whereas it is known that he reigned but three, and in this place therefore the γ,

casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And it was the third hour,<sup>2</sup> and they crucified him.

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 33. Matt. xxvii. 45.

three, was mistaken for c, six. 4. There is some external authority for reading third in John xix. 14. The Cambridge MS. has this reading. Nonnus, who lived in the fifth century, says that this was the true reading. Wetstein. Peter of Alexandria, in a fragment concerning the passover, as quoted by Usher, says, "It was the preparation of the passover, and about the third hour, as," he adds, "the most accurate copies of the Bible have it; and this was the handwriting of the evangelist John, which is kept, by the grace of God, in his most holy church at Ephesus." Mill. It is to be admitted, however, that no great reliance is to be placed on this account. That a mistake might have occurred in the early MSS. is not improbable. No man can prove that it did not so occur, and as long as this cannot be proved, the passages should not be adduced as conclusive proof of contradiction.

After all, perhaps the whole difficulty may be removed by the following statements. 1. Calvary was without the walls of Jerusalem. It was a considerable distance from the place where Jesus was tried and condemned. Some time, more or less, would be occupied in going there, and in the preparatory measures for crucifying him. 2. It is not necessary to understand Mark as saying that it was precisely nine o'clock, according to our expression. With the Jews, it was six, until seven; it was the third hour until the fourth commenced; it was the ninth until it was the tenth. They included in the third hour the whole time from the third to the fourth. The same mode they adopted in regard to their days. See Note, Matt. xii. 40. 3. It is not unduly pressing the matter to suppose that Mark spoke of the time when the process for crucifixion commenced; i.e. when he was condemned; when they entered upon it; when they made the preparation. Between that, and the time when he was taken out of Jerusalem to mount Calvary, and when he was actually nailed to the tree, there is no improbability in supposing that there might have been an interval of more than

26 And the superscription of his cusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27 And with him they crucify two thieves;<sup>1</sup> the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture<sup>2</sup> was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29 And<sup>3</sup> they that passed by laughed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou<sup>4</sup> that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

Matt. xxvii. 38. Luke xxiii. 32, 33. <sup>2</sup> Isa. 53. 12. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxii. 7. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xiv. 58. John 8.

hour. Indeed, the presumption is that considerably more time than that would pass. 4. John does not profess, as has been remarked, to be strictly accurate. He says, "it was about the sixth hour,"

5. Now suppose that John meant to indicate the time when he was actually hanged on the cross; that he spoke of crucifixion denoting the act of suspension, as it struck him, and there is no difficulty. Any other two men, any witnesses might give just such an account. One man would speak of the time as the process for an execution commenced, another perhaps of the very act of the execution, and would both speak it in general terms and say that a man was executed at such a time. And the substantial variation would prove that there was no collusion, no agreement to make on a court, that they were honest witnesses. That is proved here. 6. That is the true account of the matter is clear from the evangelists themselves, and especially from Mark. The three first evangelists concur in stating that there was a remarkable darkness over the whole land from the sixth to the ninth hour. Luke xv. 33. Matt. xxvii. 45. Luke xiii. 44. This fact would seem to indicate that the actual crucifixion continued during that time, that he was in fact hanged at about the sixth hour, though the preparations for crucifying him had

31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see<sup>5</sup> and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

33 And<sup>6</sup> when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying,<sup>7</sup> ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?

<sup>5</sup> Rom. iii. 3. <sup>2</sup> Tim. ii. 13. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvii. 45. Luke xxiii. 44. <sup>7</sup> Psa. xxii. 1.

been going on (Mark) for two hours before. The fact that Mark mentions this darkness, ch. xv. 33, as commencing at the sixth and not at the third hour, is one of the circumstances undesignedly occurring that seems to signify that the crucifixion then had actually taken place, though the various arrangements for it, ver. 25, had been going on from the third hour.

One thing is conclusively proved by this, that the evangelists did not conspire together to impose on the world. They are independent witnesses, and they were honest men. And the circumstance adverted to here is one that is allowed to be of great value in testimony in courts of justice, circumstantial variation with essential agreement.

26. *The superscription.* The writing over his head on the cross. ¶ *The king of the Jews.* See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 37.

28. *And the scripture was fulfilled,* &c. This passage of scripture is found in Isa. liii. 12. This does not mean that he was a transgressor, but simply, that in dying, he had a place with transgressors. Nor does it mean that God regarded him as a sinner; but that, at his death, in popular estimation, or, by the sentence of the judge, he was regarded as a transgressor, and was treated in the same manner as the others put to death for their transgressions. Jesus died, the just

which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?<sup>1</sup>

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and<sup>2</sup> gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 And<sup>3</sup> Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the veil of the temple<sup>4</sup> was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

39 ¶ And when the centurion,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlii. 9; lxxi. 11. Lam. i. 12. \* Psa. lvi. 21. \* Matt. xxvii. 50; Luke xxiii. 46. John xix. 30. \* Exod. xxvi. 31—34; xl. 21. Lev. xvi. 2. 2 Chron. iii. 14.

for the unjust, and in his death, as well as in his life, he was holy, harmless, undefiled.

42. *The even.* The time after three o'clock in the afternoon. ¶ *The preparation, &c.* The following day was to be a day of peculiar solemnity, called the great day of the feast. More than ordinary preparation was, therefore, made for that sabbath on the day before. Hence the day was known as a day of preparation. This preparation consisted in food, &c. to be used on the sabbath.

43. *Joseph—an honourable counsellor.* A distinguished man who probably held a high office among the Jews, as one of their great council, or a Jewish senator. The word *honourable* here is not a mere title of office, but is given in reference to his personal character, as being a man of integrity and blameless life. ¶ *Waited for the kingdom of God.* Waited for, or expected, the coming of the Messiah. But this expression means more than an indefinite expectation that the Messiah would come, for all the Jews expected that. It implies that he believed Jesus to be the Messiah, and that he had waited for him to build up the kingdom of God; and this agrees with what John says, ch. xix. 38, that he was a disciple of Jesus,

which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 There were also women looking on afar<sup>5</sup> off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;

41 (Who, also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered<sup>6</sup> unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

42 ¶ And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

43 Joseph of Arimathæa, an honourable counsellor, which also

\* Psa. xxxviii. 11. \* Luke viii. 2, 3.

but secretly for fear of the Jews. He had retained his secret belief in the hope that Jesus would be proclaimed and treated as the Messiah, and then he probably proposed openly to acknowledge his attachment to him. But God called him to a public profession of attachment in a different manner, and gave him grace to make that profession. So men often delay a profession of attachment to Christ. They cherish a secret love, they indulge a hope in the mercy of God, but they conceal it for fear of man. Whereas God requires that the attachment should be made known. He that is ashamed of me, said the Saviour, and of my words before men, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he shall come in the glory of his Father and of the holy angels. Those who love the Saviour have no right to hide their light under a bushel. As soon as they have evidence, satisfactory to their own mind, that they are Christians, or have a prevalent belief, after faithful examination, that they truly love God, and depend on the Lord Jesus for salvation, so soon are they bound to profess Christ before men. This is the command of God, and this is the way of peace. None have the prospect of comfort in religion, who do not have respect to all

A.D. 33.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Joseph's garden.*

waited <sup>1</sup> for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a

sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, <sup>2</sup> and rolled a <sup>3</sup> stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*The resurrection, 1—8. Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene, 9, 10; to the disciples who are incredulous, 11—14. The commission, 15—18. Christ's ascension, 19, 20.*

AND <sup>4</sup> when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Sa-

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii. 25, 38; xxiii. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. llii. 9. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 3, 4. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxviii. 1—8. Luke xxiv. 1—12. John xx. 1—14.

of the commandments of God. ¶ *Went in boldly unto Pilate.* God had raised up this distinguished counsellor and secret disciple for a special and most important vocation. The disciples of Jesus had fled, and if they had not, they had no influence with Pilate. Unless there had been a special application to Pilate in behalf of Jesus, his body would have been buried that night in the common grave with the malefactors: for it was a law of the Jews that the body of an executed man should not remain on the cross on the sabbath. At this critical juncture, God called forward this secret disciple, this friend of Jesus, though unknown as such to the world, and gave him confidence; he dared to express sympathy for the Saviour; he went in boldly, and begged the body of Jesus. It needed no small measure of courage to do this. Jesus had just been condemned, mocked, spit on, crucified, the death of a slave, or the most guilty wretch. To avow attachment for him now was proof of sincere affection; and the Holy Spirit has thought this worthy of special notice; and has set down this bold attachment of a senator for Jesus, for our imitation. ¶ *Craved the body.* Begged, or asked for the body.

44. *And Pilate marvelled if.* Wondered if he was dead; or wondered that he was so soon dead. It was not common for persons crucified to expire under two or three days, sometimes not until the sixth or seventh day. *Joseph had asked*

for the body, implying that he was dead. That he was had been ascertained by the soldiers. See John xix. 33.

45. *When he knew it of the centurion.* Being informed by the centurion of the fact that he was dead. The centurion had charge of the soldiers who watched at the cross, and could, therefore, give correct information.

47. *Beheld where he was laid.* The affection of these pious females never forsook them, in all the trials and sufferings of their Lord. With true love they followed him to the cross; they came as near to him as they were permitted to come, in his last moments; they followed him when taken down and laid in the tomb. The strong, the mighty, the youthful had fled; but female love never forsook him, even in his deepest humiliation. This is the nature of true love. It is strongest in such scenes. While professed attachment will abound in prosperity, and live most in sunshine, it is only genuine love that will go into the dark shades of adversity, and flourish there. In scenes of poverty, want, affliction, and death, it shows its genuineness. That which lives there is genuine. That which turns away from such scenes, is spurious.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1—8. See this passage explained in Matt. xxviii. 1—8.

1. *Sweet spices.* Aromatics. Sub-

lome, had bought sweet spices, <sup>1</sup> that they might come and anoint him.

2 And very early in the morning the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiv. 3—8. 2 Chron. xvi. 14. Luke xxiii. 56.

stances used in embalming. The idea of sweetness is not, however, implied in the original. Many of the substances used for embalming were bitter; as, e. g., myrrh; and none of them perhaps could properly be called sweet. The word *spices* expresses all that there is in the original. ¶ *Anoint him.* Embalm him. Or apply these spices to his body to keep it from putrefaction. This is proof that they did not suppose he would rise again. And the fact that they did not expect he would rise gives more strength to the evidence for his resurrection.

4. *It was very great.* These words belong to the third verse: "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? for," the evangelist adds, "it was very great."

5. *Sitting on the right side.* As they entered. The sepulchre was large enough to admit persons to go into it; not unlike our vaults in that respect.

7. *And Peter.* It is remarkable that Peter is singled out for special notice. It was proof of the kindness and mercy of the Lord Jesus. Peter, just before the death of Jesus, had denied him. He had brought dishonour on his profession of attachment to him. He had been

is risen; <sup>2</sup> he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man*; for they were afraid.

9 ¶ Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had

<sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 9, 10; x. 34. Psa. lxxi. 20. John ii. 19—22.

brought to see the crime, and to weep bitterly. It would have been right if the Lord Jesus had from that moment cast him off, and noticed him no more. But he loved him still. Having loved him once, he loved unto the end. John xiii. 1. As a proof that he forgave him, and still loved him, he sent him this special message, the assurance that though he had denied him, and had done much to aggravate his sufferings, yet he had risen, and was still his Lord and Redeemer. We are not to infer, because the angel said, "tell his disciples and Peter," that Peter was not still a disciple. The meaning is, "tell his disciples, and especially Peter;" sending to him a particular message. Peter was still a disciple. Before his fall, Jesus had prayed for him that his faith should not fail, Luke xxii. 32; and as the prayer of Jesus was always heard, John xi. 42, it follows that Peter still retained faith sufficient to be a disciple, though, like other disciples, he was suffered to fall into sin.

11. *Believed not.* This is proof that they did not expect his resurrection; proof that they were not easily deceived; and that nothing but the clearest evidence could undeceive them.

heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 ¶ After that he appeared in another form unto <sup>1</sup> two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

14 ¶ Afterward <sup>2</sup> he appeared unto the eleven as they sat <sup>3</sup> at

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 13. <sup>2</sup> Luke xxiv. 36. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 5. <sup>4</sup> Or, together; ch. viii. 17, 18.

12. *He appeared in another form.* In a form unlike his ordinary appearance, so much so that they did not at first know him. See Notes on Luke xxiv. 13—31. ¶ *As they walked and went into the country.* To Emmaus. Luke xxiv. 13.

13. *The residue.* The remainder. Those who remained at Jerusalem.

14. ¶ *As they sat at meat.* The word *meat* here means food or meals. As they were reclining at their meal. ¶ *And upbraided them,* &c. Rebuked them or reproached them. This was done because, after all the evidence they had had of his resurrection, still they did not believe. This is a most important circumstance in the history of our Lord's resurrection. Never were men more difficult to be convinced of any thing than they were of that fact. And this shows, conclusively, that they had not conspired to impose on the world, that they had given up all for lost when he died, that they did not expect his resurrection, and all this is the strongest proof that he truly rose. They were not convinced, until it was impossible for them longer to deny it. Had they expected it, they would have caught easily at the slightest evidence, and even turned every circumstance in favour of such an event. It may be added, that it was impossible that eleven men of good natural understanding should have been deceived in so plain a case. They had been with Jesus three years; they perfectly knew his features, voice, manner. And it was impossible that they should have been deceived, by any one who might have pretended to be the Lord Jesus.

15. *Into all the world.* To the Gen-

teiles as well as the Jews. This was contrary to the opinions of the Jews, that the Gentiles should be admitted to the privileges of the Messiah's kingdom, or that the partition wall between them should be broken down. See Acts xxii. 21, 22. It was long before the disciples could be trained to the belief that the gospel was to be preached to all men; and it was only by special revelation, even after this command, that Peter preached to the gentile centurion. Acts x. Jesus has graciously ordered that the preaching of the gospel shall be stopped by no barriers. Wherever there is man, there it is to be proclaimed. To every sinner he offers life, and all the world is included in the message of mercy, and to every child of Adam is offered eternal salvation. ¶ *Preach.* Proclaim, make known, offer. To do this to every creature, is to offer pardon and eternal life to him on the terms of the plan of mercy, through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus. ¶ *The gospel.* The good news. The tidings of salvation. The assurance that the Messiah is come, and that sin may be forgiven, and the soul saved. ¶ *To every creature.* To the whole creation. That is, to every human being. We have no right to limit this offer to any class of men. God commands his servants to offer the salvation to all men. If they reject it, it is at their peril. God is not to blame if they do not choose to be saved. His mercy is manifest, his grace is boundless in offering life to a creature so guilty as man.

15 And he said unto them, Go <sup>5</sup> ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.<sup>6</sup>

16 He <sup>7</sup> that believeth, and is baptized shall be saved; but

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv. 25. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19. John xx. 21. <sup>6</sup> Rom. x. 18. Col. i. 23. <sup>7</sup> John iii. 18, 36. Acts xvi. 31—33. Rom. x. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief <sup>4</sup> and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go <sup>5</sup> ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.<sup>6</sup>

16 He <sup>7</sup> that believeth, and is baptized shall be saved; but

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv. 25. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19. John xx. 21. <sup>6</sup> Rom. x. 18. Col. i. 23. <sup>7</sup> John iii. 18, 36. Acts xvi. 31—33. Rom. x. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief <sup>4</sup> and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

16. *He that believeth.* That is, believeth the gospel. Credits it as true, and

he <sup>a</sup> that believeth not shall be damned.

<sup>a</sup> John xii. 48. 2 Thess. ii. 12.

acts as if it were true. This is the whole of faith. Man is a sinner. He should act on the belief of this truth and repent. There is a God. Man should believe it, and fear and love him, and seek his favour. The Lord Jesus died to save him. To have faith in him, is to believe that this is true and to act accordingly; i. e. to trust him, to rely on him, to love him, to feel that we have no merit, and to cast our all upon him. There is a heaven and a hell. To believe this, is to credit the account and act as if it were true, to seek the one and avoid the other. We are to die. To believe this, is to act as if this were so, to be in readiness for it, and to expect it daily and hourly. In one word, faith is feeling and acting as if there were a God, a Saviour, a heaven, a hell, as if we were sinners and must die, as if we deserved eternal death and were in danger of it, and in view of all, casting our eternal interests on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. To do this is to be a Christian; not to do it is to be an infidel. ¶ *Is baptized.* Is initiated into the church by the application of water, as significant that he is a sinner, and needs the purifying influences of the Holy Ghost. It is worthy of remark that Jesus has made baptism of so much importance. He did not say, indeed, that a man could not be saved without baptism, but he has strongly implied that where this is neglected, knowing it to be a command of the Saviour, it endangers the salvation of the soul. Faith and baptism are the beginnings of a christian life; the one the beginning of piety in the soul, the other of its manifestation before men, or of a profession of religion. And every man endangers his eternal interest by being ashamed of Christ before men. See Mark viii. 38. ¶ *Shall be saved.* Saved from sin, Matt. i. 21, and from eternal death, John iii. 36; v. 24, and raised to eternal life in heaven. John v. 28; xvii. 2, 24. ¶ *Shall be damned.* That is, condemned by God, and cast off from his presence. 2 Thess. i. 6—9. It implies that they will be adjudged by God to be guilty in the day of judgment, Matt. xxv. 41; Rom. ii. 12, 16, that they will deserve to

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In <sup>a</sup> my name

<sup>a</sup> Luke x. 17. Acts v. 16; viii. 7; xvi. 18; xix. 12

die forever, Rom. ii. 6—9, and that they will be cast out into a place of woe to all eternity. Matt. xxv. 46. It may be asked how it can be just in God to condemn men for ever for not believing the gospel. I answer: 1. God has a right to appoint his own terms of mercy. 2. Man has no claim on him for heaven. 3. The sinner rejects the terms of salvation knowingly, deliberately, and perseveringly. 4. He has a special disregard and contempt for the gospel. 5. His unbelief is produced by the love of sin. 6. He shows by this that he has no love for God, and his law and for eternity. 7. He slight the objects dearest to God, and most like him. And, 8. He must be miserable. A creature who has no confidence in God, who does not believe that he is true or worthy of regard, and who never seeks his favour, must be wretched. He rejects God, and he must go into eternity without a Father and without a God. And he has no source of comfort in himself, so must die for ever. There is no being in eternity but God that can make man happy, and without his favour the sinner must be wretched.

17. *And these signs.* These miracles. These evidences that they are sent from God. ¶ *Them that believe.* The apostles and those in the primitive age who were endowed with like power. The promise is fulfilled if it can be shown that these signs followed in the case of any who believed, and it is not necessary to suppose that they would follow in the case of all. The meaning is, that they should be the result of faith, or of the belief of the gospel. It is true that they were. They were shown in the case of the apostles and early Christians. The infidel cannot say that the promise has not been fulfilled, unless he can show that signs never occurred; the Christian should be satisfied that the promise was fulfilled; these miracles were ever actually wrought though they do not occur now, and the believer now should not expect a miracle in his case. Miracles were necessary for the establishment of religion in the world they are not necessary now. ¶ *In my name.* By my authority, and using the

shall they cast out devils; they shall speak <sup>1</sup> with new tongues;

18 They shall take up <sup>2</sup> serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they <sup>3</sup> shall

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 4; x. 46.

1 Cor. xii. 10,

<sup>2</sup> Luke x. 19.

Acts xxviii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Acts v. 15, 16; xxviii. 8. 1 Cor. xii. Jas. v. 14, 15.

power that I would use in such cases if bodily present. This was done: and in this they differed essentially from the manner in which Jesus himself wrought miracles. He did it in his own name. He did it as possessing original, undervied authority. See the account of his stilling the sea, Matt. viii. 26, 27; of his healing the sick, Matt. ix. 5, 6; of his raising Lazarus, John xi. The prophets spoke in the name of the Lord. The apostles did so likewise. Acts iii. 6-11. There was, therefore, an important difference between Jesus and all the other messengers that God has sent into the world. He acted in his own name, they in the name of another. He wielded his own power; they were the instruments by which God put forth the omnipotence of his arm to save. He was, therefore, God; they were men of like passions as other men. Acts xiv. 15. ¶ *Shall they cast out devils.* See Note on Matt. iv. 24. Compare Acts xvi. 16-18. ¶ *Shall speak with new tongues.* Shall speak other languages than their native language. This was remarkably fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Acts ii. 4-11. This miraculous speaking of other languages existed also, afterwards. See 1 Cor. xii. 10.

18. *They shall take up serpents.* When it is necessary for the sake of establishing religion, they shall handle poisonous reptiles without injury: thus showing that God was with them, to keep them from harm. This was literally fulfilled when Paul shook the viper from his hand. See Acts xxviii. 5, 6. ¶ *Any deadly thing.* Any poison usually causing death. ¶ *Shall not hurt them.* There is a similar promise in Isa. xliii. 2. ¶ *They shall lay hands on the sick, &c.* See instances of this in the Acts of the Apostles, ch. iii. 6, 7; v. 15, 16.

19. *He was received up into heaven.* In a cloud from the mount of Olives.

lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 ¶ So then <sup>4</sup> after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat <sup>5</sup> on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and

<sup>4</sup> Acts i. 2, 3. Luke xxiv. 51. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cx. i. 1 Pet. iii. 22. Rev. iii. 21.

See Acts i. 9. ¶ *The right hand of God.* We are not to suppose that God has hands, or that Jesus sits in any particular direction from God. This phrase is taken from the manner of speaking among men, and means that he was exalted to honour and power in the heavens. It was esteemed the place of the highest honour to be seated at the right hand of a prince. So, to be seated at the right hand of God, means only that Jesus is exalted to the highest honour of the universe. Compare Eph. i. 20-22.

20. *They went forth.* The apostles. ¶ *Everywhere.* In all parts of the world. See the account in the Acts and the Epistles. ¶ *The Lord working with them.* By miracles; by removing obstacles; by supporting them, and by giving the gospel success, and making it effectual to saving men. ¶ *Confirming the word.* Showing it to be the word of God, or a revelation from heaven. ¶ *By signs following.* By attending miracles. By raising the dead, healing the sick, &c., as signs that God was with them, and had sent them forth to preach. ¶ *Amen.* Truly, verily. So be it. This word here is of no authority. There is no reason to think that it was added by Mark.

Mark is more concise than any other of the evangelists. In most instances he coincides with Matthew, though he has added some circumstances which Matthew had omitted. There is no evidence, however, that he copied from Matthew. The last chapter in Mark contains some things omitted in Matthew, and some things of fearful import. We learn from it that the gospel is to be preached to all mankind. Eternal life is to be offered to every man, and he who rejects it does so at his peril. The condition of the man who will not believe is fearfully awful. The Son of God has so solemnly declared that he shall be damned. He will judge



*Apostles' commission.*

MARK.

A.D. 33.

preached everywhere, the <sup>1</sup> Lord working with *them*, and confirm-

<sup>1</sup> Acts iv. 30; v. 12; viii. 4—6; xiv. 3, 8—10. Heb. ii. 4.

the world; and there is none that can deliver out of his hand. No excuse will be allowed for not believing. Unless a man has faith, he must be lost for ever. This is the solemn assurance of the whole Bible, and in view of this awful declaration of the merciful Redeemer, how sad is the

ing the word with signs following. Amen.

condition of him who has no confidence in Jesus, and who has never looked to him for eternal life. And how important that without delay he should make his peace with God, and possess that faith which is connected with eternal life!

CHARACTERISTICS  
OF  
LUKE'S GOSPEL.

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IN speaking of the characteristics of Mark's gospel, p. 351, it was observed that the difference between Mark and Matthew is that between a narrative designed to convey information simply, and one designed to sustain a particular argument. The gospel of Luke differs from both, though in some respects it more nearly resembles Mark than Matthew. It also is a narrative, properly speaking, a history; some have spoken of it as the only gospel history we have; Mark's being regarded as a personal memoir, the materials of which were furnished by one of the apostles, whereas Luke had avowedly many accounts or narratives before him which probably were a guide to his thoughts and pen as he wrote. He was not an apostle, nor did he derive his knowledge as Mark did from companionship with one of Christ's chosen apostles who had attended him during his life in our world, still he had gained "perfect understanding of all things from the very first." He addresses his gospel to Theophilus, of whom we know nothing more than his name, and that probably he was a man of rank; but a writing so addressed carries on its very face the indications of its verity; besides that as Luke himself says, it was composed that Theophilus might know the certainty of the things wherein he had been instructed, ch. i. 4.

We might expect from the structure of the two gospels, Mark's and Luke's, that they would present more agreement in the events exhibited and in the succession of those events, than is to be looked for between either of those writers and Matthew; and this expectation corresponds with the fact. Take, for example, the two tours of Christ in Galilee, as recorded by Luke and Mark, their respective circumstances very nearly agree. In the first tour, Mark mentions Jesus as going to Capernaum; as entering Simon's house; and as healing a leper. Luke mentions the same things, introducing between the second and the third, Christ's betaking himself also to Simon's ship or boat. In the second tour, both evangelists correspond in the principal events, viz., the healing of the palsied man who was brought to Jesus to be healed; the call of Levi; the fasting of John's disciples; and the passing of Jesus and his followers through the corn-fields.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF LUKE'S GOSPEL.

Luke's minuter attention to accuracy is, however, evident in slight departures from Mark, and in numerous additions to him. Mark has united the parables of the sower and the grain of mustard seed; Luke separates them. Mark says nothing about an occurrence mentioned by Matthew, ch. viii. 19; Luke gives time and place, ch. ix. 51—58. In Matthew and Mark, ch. xvii. 1, ix. 2, mention is made of six days; Luke makes the time eight days, ch. ix. 27, 28. In Luke xiii. 39—43, we find one malefactor rebuking the other for reviling Jesus, whereas Matthew and Mark say the *malefactors* were thus guilty. Luke tells us of two angels at the sepulchre, thus differing apparently from both Mark and Matthew. John sustains him. Here the maxim of Leclerc, already given in our observations on the gospel of Mark, holds true.

The accuracy for which Luke is distinguished must, however, be regarded as manifested rather in the minuteness and correctness of his facts, than in their chronological order.

Luke, probably, was the most learned of all the four evangelists. The introduction to his gospel, ch. i. 1—4, is written in pure classical Greek, differing greatly from the Hellenistic Greek which they employed, and which he himself used in his gospel generally. This difference in the style of Luke between his introduction and gospel generally has been explained by the supposition that in the introduction he adopts his own natural mode of writing as a man of letters, while in the gospel he followed the style of the writers and witnesses from whom he gathered his materials. In the Acts of the Apostles (another writing from Luke's pen) a similar difference is discernible in portions that narrate what he himself saw and had a share in, as distinguished from other portions which narrate what he must have received from the testimony of others. This, by the way, may be regarded as proof of the truthfulness and integrity of Luke. His superior learning influenced his style of writing generally. For instance, he records, as a professional man, the nature and symptoms of diseases with greater minuteness than the other evangelists, ch. iv. 38; v. 12; he mentions miracles not referred to by Matthew and Mark, to which his professional inclinations would lead him, ch. xiii. 11—19; xiv. 2—4; xvii. 12—14; and occasionally he uses technical expressions such as are found in the earliest medical works. The waters of Gennesareth, styled by the other evangelists a sea, are more correctly designated by Luke a lake. He was besides, as Tholuck truly observes, "explicit and learned on antiquarian, historical, and geographical subjects."

The value of this gospel is greatly enhanced by its preserving many accounts which none of the other evangelists has given; for instance, there are the particulars respecting the childhood of Jesus; the beautiful parables in ch. xv. and ch. xvi.; the narrative of Christ's appearance after his resurrection, to Cleopas and his companion in

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF LUKE'S GOSPEL.

their way to Emmaus, and many other particulars included in the history from ch. ix. 51, to xix. 27. With the last journey to Jerusalem, commencing ch. ix. 51, circumstances are mingled which, as appears from other evangelists, belong to previous journeys.

It has been thought that greater historical accuracy belongs to Luke than to Matthew; but besides that this notion affects the inspiration of Matthew, and probably that of Luke also, a closer comparison of these reports makes it difficult to indicate which of the evangelists is the more correct, and which enjoyed the greater degree of independent and original information. Luke may be the clearer writer, but in many particulars, especially in the discourses of Christ, Matthew is the more precise. Still, this remark is not without exception, since Luke sometimes states with more precision than Matthew the circumstances under which some of those discourses were delivered. Chronological notices are also occasionally given with greater minuteness by Luke than by either Matthew or Mark, yet, "the distinguishing feature of this gospel, compared with the two preceding," as Dr. Bloomfield remarks in his Greek Testament, "is that while *those* relate the facts they record *chronologically*, *this* narrates them according to a *classification* of the events of our Saviour's life and actions. Class I. contains the narration of the birth of Christ, introduced by the circumstances that preceded, accompanied, or followed it, ch. i., ii. 1—4. Class II. comprehends his infancy and youth, ch. ii. 41—52. Class III. comprises the preaching of John and the baptism of Christ, with his genealogy, ch. iii. Class IV. comprehends the discourses, miracles, and actions of Christ during the whole of his ministry, ch. iv.—ix. 50. Class V. contains an account of our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem, together with every thing relative to his passion, death, resurrection, and ascension, ch. ix. 51—62, L.—xxiv."

S. G

P R E F A C E

TO THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

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LITTLE can be ascertained concerning the time and place of writing this Gospel; or concerning the author. The first time we have any mention of the author is in his own history. Acts xvi. 10, 11. He was then the companion of Paul in his travels; and it is evident that he often attended Paul in his journeys. Compare Acts xvi. 11—17; xxi. 1—8. In all these places the author of "the Acts" speaks of his being in company with Paul. That the same person was the writer of this Gospel is also clear from Acts i. 1.

From this fact, the ancients regarded this Gospel as, in fact, the gospel which Paul had preached. They affirm that Luke recorded what the apostle preached. Thus Irenæus says, "Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the gospel preached by him." He also says, "Luke was not only a companion, but also a fellow labourer of the apostles, especially of Paul." Origen, speaking of the Gospels, says, "the third is that according to Luke, the gospel commended by Paul, published for the sake of the gentile converts." The testimony of the fathers is uniform, that it was written by Luke the companion of Paul, and was therefore regarded by them as really the gospel which Paul preached.

It is unknown where it was written. Jerome says it was composed in Achaia. There seems to be some probability that it was written to persons that were well acquainted with Jewish manners, since the author does not stop to explain the peculiar customs of the Jews, as some of the other evangelists have done. Respecting the time when it was written, nothing certain is known. All that can be ascertained is that it was written before the death of Paul, A.D. 65. For it was written before the Acts, Acts i. 1, and that book only brings down the life of Paul to his imprisonment at Rome, and previous to his going into Spain.

It has been made a matter of inquiry, whether Luke was a Gentile or a Jew. On this subject there is no positive testimony. Jerome, and others of the fathers, say that he was a Syrian, and that he was

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at Antioch. The most probable opinion seems to be, that he was proselyte to the Jewish religion, though descended from Gentile ancestors. For this opinion two reasons may be assigned, of some weight. 1. He was intimately acquainted, as appears by the Gospel and the Acts, with the Jewish rites, customs, opinions, and prejudices; he wrote in their dialect, i. e., with much of the Hebrew phraseology, in a style similar to the other evangelists: from which it appears he was accustomed to the Jewish religion, and was probably a proselyte. Yet the preface to his Gospel, as critics have remarked, is in classic Greek, unlike the Greek that was used by native Jews; which it seems not improbable that he was by birth and education a Gentile. 2. In Acts xxi. 27, it is said that the Asiatic Jews excited a multitude against Paul, because he had introduced Gentiles into the temple, thus defiling it. In ver. 29, it is said that the Gentile to whom they had reference, was Trophimus, an Ephesian. Yet Luke was also at that time with Paul. If he had been regarded as a Gentile, it is probable that they would have made complaint respecting him, as was the case with Trophimus. From which it is supposed that he was either a proselyte Jew, or a Jewish proselyte.

But, again, in the epistle to the Colossians, ch. iv. 9—11, we find Paul saying, that Aristarchus, and Marcus, and Barnabas, and Justus, saluted them, "who are," he adds, "of the circumcision," i. e., Jews by birth. In verse 14, he says that Luke, the beloved physician, and Paul also saluted them; from which it is inferred that they were not of the circumcision, but were by birth Gentiles.

Most writers suppose that Luke, the writer of this Gospel, was inserted in the above place in Colossians. If so, his profession was that of a physician. And it has been remarked that his descriptions of diseases are more accurate and circumstantial, and have more of medical correctness than those of the other evangelists.

Luke does not profess to have been an eye-witness of what he recorded. See ch. i. 2, 3. It is clear, therefore, that he was not one of the seventy disciples, nor one of the two who went to Emmaus, as has been sometimes supposed. Nor was he an apostle. By the name he is uniformly called the companion of the apostles, and especially of Paul.

If he was not one of the apostles, and if he was not one of those expressly commissioned by our Lord, to whom the promise of the Holy Ghost was given, the question arises, what authority his Gospel and the Acts have a place in the sacred canon, or what evidence is there that he was divinely inspired?

In regard to this question, the following considerations may give satisfaction. 1. They were received by all the churches on the same footing as the first three Gospels. There is not a dissenting voice in regard to their authenticity and authority. The value of this argument lies in this—that if *they had been* spurious, or without authority, the

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fathers were the proper persons to know it. 2. They were published during the lives of the apostles, Peter, Paul, and John, and were received during their lives, as books of sacred authority. If these books were not inspired, and had no authority, those apostles could easily have destroyed their credit, and we have reason to think it would have been done. 3. It is the united testimony of the fathers that this gospel was submitted to Paul, and received his express approbation. It was regarded as the substance of his preaching. And if it received his approbation, it comes to us on the authority of his name. Indeed, if this is the case, it rests on the same authority as the epistles of Paul himself. 4. It bears the same marks of inspiration as the other books. It is simple, pure, yet sublime ; there is nothing unworthy of God ; and it is elevated far above the writings of any uninspired man. 5. If he was not inspired—if, as we suppose, he was a Gentile by birth—and if, as is most clear, he was not an eye-witness of what he records ; it is inconceivable how, if he were not inspired, he could write without contradicting the other evangelists. That he did not borrow from them is clear. Nor is it possible to conceive that he could write a book, varying in the order of its arrangement so much, and adding so many new facts, and repeating so many recorded also by the others, without often having contradicted what was written by them. Let any man compare this Gospel with the spurious gospels of the following centuries, and he will be struck with the force of this remark. 6. If it be objected, that not being an apostle, he did not come within the promise made to the apostles of inspiration ; we reply, that this was also the case with Paul ; yet no small part of the New Testament is composed of his writings. The evidence of the inspiration of Luke and Mark and Paul is to be judged, not only by that promise, but by the early reception given to their writings by the churches, by the testimony of the fathers as to the judgment of inspired men when living, and by the internal character of the works. Luke has all these, equally with the other evangelists.

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

## CHAPTER I.

*Preface to the gospel, 1—4. John Baptist's birth foretold, 5—20. Zacharias dumb, 20—22. His return home from the temple, 23—25. Birth of Jesus foretold, 26—38. Visit of Mary to Elizabeth, 39—56. John born, 57—63. Zachariah's dumbness removed and his song, 64—80.*

**F**ORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in

1. *Forasmuch as many.* It has been doubted who are referred to here by the word *many*. It seems clear that it could not be the other evangelists. For the Gospel by John was not yet written, and the word *many* denotes clearly more than two. Besides, it is said that they undertook to record what the eye-witnesses had delivered to them, so that the writers did not pretend to be eye-witnesses themselves. It is clear, therefore, that other writings were meant than the gospels which we now have; but what they were is a matter of conjecture. What are now known as spurious gospels were written long after Luke wrote his. It is probable that Luke refers to fragments of history, or to narratives of detached sayings, acts, or parables of our Lord, which had been made and circulated among the disciples and others. His doctrines were original, bold, pure, and authoritative. His miracles had been extraordinary, clear, and awful. His life and death had been peculiar; and it is not improbable, indeed it is highly probable, that such broken accounts and narratives of detached facts would be preserved. That this was what Luke meant, appears further from ver. 3, where he professes to write "in order," i. e. to give a regular, full, and systematic account. The others were broken, and incomplete. This was to be regular and full. ¶ *Taken in hand.* Undertaken, attempted. ¶ *To set forth in order.* To compose a narrative. It does not refer to the order or arrangement, but means simply to give a narrative. The word rendered here, *in order*, is different from that in the third verse, which has reference to order, or to

order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning<sup>1</sup> were eye-witnesses, and ministers of<sup>2</sup> the word;

<sup>1</sup> John xv. 27. Heb. ii. 3. 1 Pet. v. 1. 2 Pet. i. 16. 1 John i. 1. <sup>2</sup> Rom. xv. 16. Eph. iii. 7; iv. 11, 12.

a full and fair arrangement of the principal facts, &c., in the history of our Lord. ¶ *A declaration.* A narrative, an account of. ¶ *Which are most surely believed among us.* Among Christians, among all the Christians then living. Here remark, 1. That Christians of that day had the best opportunities of knowing whether those things were true. Many had seen them, and all others had had the account from those who had witnessed them. 2. That infidels now cannot possibly be as good judges in the matter as those who lived at the time, and who were thus competent to determine whether these things were true or false. 3. That all Christians do most surely believe the truth of the gospel. It is their life, their hope, their all. Nor can they doubt that their Saviour lived, bled, died, rose, and still lives; that he was their atoning sacrifice; and that he is God over all, blessed for ever.

2. *As they delivered them.* As they narrated them. As they gave an account of them. ¶ *From the beginning.* From the commencement of these things; that is, from the birth of John. Or perhaps from the beginning of the ministry of Jesus. ¶ *Eye-witnesses.* Who had seen themselves, and who were therefore proper witnesses. ¶ *Ministers of the word.* The term *word* here means the Gospel. Luke never uses it, as John does, to denote the second person of the Trinity. These eye-witnesses and ministers refer doubtless to the seventy disciples, to the apostles, and perhaps to other preachers who had gone forth to proclaim the same things.



3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, <sup>1</sup> most excellent Theophilus, <sup>2</sup>

4 That thou mightest know <sup>3</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi. 4. <sup>2</sup> Acts i. 1. <sup>3</sup> John xxi. 31.

3. *It seemed good.* I thought it best, or, I have also determined. It seemed to be called for that there should be a full, authentic, and accurate account of these matters. ¶ *Having had perfect understanding, &c.* The literal translation of the original would be 'having exactly traced everything from the first.' Or 'having, by diligent and careful investigation, followed up everything to the source, to obtain an accurate account of the matter.' This much better expresses the idea. Luke did not profess to have seen these things, and this expression is to show how he acquired his information. It was by tracing up every account till he became satisfied of its truth. Here observe, 1. That in religion God does not set aside our natural faculties. He calls us to look at evidence, to examine accounts, to make up our own minds. Nor will any man be convinced of the truth of religion who does not make investigation, and set himself seriously to the task. 2. We see the nature of Luke's inspiration. It was consistent with his using his natural faculties; his own powers of mind, in investigating the truth. God, by his Holy Spirit, presided over his faculties; directed them, and kept him from error. ¶ *In order.* This word does not indicate that the exact order of time would be observed, for that is not the way in which he writes. But it means distinctly, particularly, in opposition to the confused and broken accounts to which he had referred before. ¶ *Most excellent Theophilus.* The word Theophilus means a friend of God, or a pious man; and it has been supposed by some that Luke did not refer to any particular individual, but to any man that loved God. But there is no reason for this opinion. For significant names were very common, and there is no good reason to doubt that this was some individual known to Luke. The application of the title, *most excellent*, further proves it. It would not be given

certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

5 **T**HERE was in the days of <sup>4</sup> Herod the king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: <sup>5</sup> and

<sup>4</sup> Matt. ii. 1. <sup>5</sup> 1 Chron. xxiv. 10. Neh. xii. 4, 17.

to an unknown man. The title, *most excellent*, has by some been supposed to be given to express his character, but it is rather to be considered as denoting rank or office. It occurs only in three other places in the New Testament, and is there given to men in office—to Felix and Festus. Acts xxiii. 26; xxiv. 3; xvi. 25. These titles express no quality of the men, but belong to the office; and we may hence learn that it is not improper for Christians, in giving honour to whom honour is due, to address men in office by their customary titles, even if their moral character be altogether unworthy of it. Who Theophilus was is unknown. It is probable that he was some distinguished Roman, or Greek, who had been converted, who was a friend of Luke, and who had requested an account of these things. It is possible that this preface might have been sent to him as a private letter with the Gospel, and Theophilus chose to have them published together.

4. *The certainty.* Have full evidence, or proof of. ¶ *Been instructed.* By the preachers of the gospel. The original word is the one from which is derived our word catechism, *been catechised*. But it does not here denote the manner in which the instruction was imparted, as it does with us; but simply the fact that he had been taught those things.

5. *In the days of Herod.* See Matt. ii. 1. ¶ *Of the course of Abia.* When the priests became so numerous that they could not at once minister at the altar, David divided them into twenty-four classes or courses, each one of which officiated for a week. 1 Chron. xxiv. The class, or course, of Abia, was the eighth in order. 1 Chron. xxiv. 10. Compare 2 Chron. viii. 14. The word *course* means the same as class, or order. The Greek word Abia is the same as the Hebrew word Abijah. ¶ *His wife was of the daughters of Aaron.* A descendant of Aaron, the first high priest of the

his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth.

6 And they were both righteous<sup>1</sup> before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances<sup>2</sup> of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they were both *now* well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vii. 1. 1 Kin. ix. 4. 2 Kin. xx. iii.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 2. Phil. iii. 6.

Jews; so that John the Baptist was descended, on the father's and the mother's side, from priests. Our Saviour was not so descended on either side. John would have been legally entitled to a place, and employment among the priests; our Saviour, being of the tribe of Judah, would not.

6. *Both righteous.* Both just, or holy. This means here more than external conformity to the law. It is an honourable testimonial of their piety towards God. ¶ *Walking in, &c.* Keeping the commandments. To walk in the way that God commands is to obey. ¶ *Ordinances.* Rites and customs which God had ordained, or appointed. These words refer to all the duties of religion, which were made known to them. ¶ *Blameless.* That is, no fault or deficiency could be found in them. They were strict, exact, punctual. Yet this, if it had been mere external observance, might have been no proof of piety. Paul, before his conversion, also kept the law externally blameless. Phil. iii. 6. But in the case of Zacharias and Elisabeth, it seems to have been real love to God, and sincere regard for his law.

7. *Well stricken in years.* Old or advanced in life, so as to render the prospect of having children hopeless.

8. *Before God.* In the temple where God dwelt by the symbols of his presence. The temple was regarded by the Jews as the house or dwelling of God; and in the first temple, in the most holy place, there was a cloud called the Shechinah, or a visible sign of the presence of God. It

while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was<sup>3</sup> to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without<sup>4</sup> at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xxx. 7, 8; xl. 26, 27. 1 Sam. ii. 28. 1 Chron. vi. 49. <sup>4</sup> Lev. xvi. 17.

was thus *before God* that Zacharias offered incense.

9. *According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was.* The Jewish writers inform us that it was customary for the priests to divide their daily task by lot. ¶ *To burn incense.* Incense is an aromatic, or white resin, procured from trees chiefly in Arabia. It is obtained by making incisions in the tree, and the gum flows out. It was distinguished for a peculiarly pleasant smell when burnt, and was therefore used in ancient worship. It was burnt by the priest twice a day, morning and evening. Ex. xxx. 7, 8.

This was the time of the evening incense. The incense used in the temple was made of stacte, onycha, and galbanum, Exod. xxx. 34, with pure frankincense, and it was not lawful for this compound to be used elsewhere than in the house of God. ¶ *Into the temple.* See Notes on Matt. xxi. 12. The part of the temple where incense was burnt was the holy place.

10. *The whole multitude.* This was the regular time for evening prayer, and multitudes came up to the temple to worship. ¶ *Praying without.* That is, in the courts around the temple, particularly in the court of the women.

11. *An angel.* An angel is a messenger sent from God. It had now been about four hundred years since the time of Malachi, and since there had been any divine revelation. During that time the nation was looking for the Messiah; but still with nothing more than the ancient prophecies to direct them. Now that he

the right side of the altar <sup>1</sup> of incense.

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, <sup>2</sup> and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth

shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name <sup>3</sup> John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice <sup>4</sup> at his birth.

15 For he shall be great <sup>5</sup> in the sight of the Lord, and shall <sup>6</sup> drink neither wine nor strong drink; and

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxx. 1-6; xxxvii. 25-29. Lev. xvi. 13. Rev. viii. 3, 4. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 29. Judg. xiii. 22. Dan. x. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 60, 63.

<sup>4</sup> Ver. 58.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. vii. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Num. vi. 3.

was about to appear, God sent his messenger to announce his coming, to encourage the hearts of his people, and to prepare them to receive him. ¶ *On the right side, &c.* The altar of incense stood close by the veil which divided the holy place from the most holy. On the north stood the table of shew-bread. On the south, the golden candlestick. As Zacharias entered, therefore, with his face to the west, the angel would stand on the north, or near the table of shew-bread. It was eighteen inches square, and three feet high. The top, as well as the sides and horns, was overlaid with pure gold, and it was finished around the upper surface with a crown or border of gold. Just below this border four golden rings were attached to each side of the altar, one near each corner. The staves or rods for bearing the altar passed through these rings, and were made of the same wood with the altar itself, and richly overlaid with the same precious metal. Upon this altar incense was burnt every morning and every evening, so that it was literally perpetual. Exod. xxx. 8. Neither burnt-sacrifice, nor meat-offering, nor drink-offering, was permitted upon this altar; nor was it ever stained with blood, except once annually, when the priest made atonement. Lev. xvi. 18, 19.

12. *He was troubled.* This was an unusual appearance. He was alone, in the presence of God. The appearance was sudden, unexpected, and therefore fearful.

13. *Thy prayer is heard.* That is, thy prayer for offspring. This, among the Jews, was an object of intense desire. No prospect was more gloomy to them than that of dying childless, so that their name should perish. Special pains, therefore, had been taken in the law, to

keep up the names of families by requiring a man to marry his brother's wife. Deut. xxv. 5.

14. *At his birth.* This does not refer so much to the time of his birth, as to the subsequent rejoicing. Such shall be his character, that he shall be an honour to the family, and many shall rejoice that he lived. Or, in other words, he shall be a blessing to mankind.

15. *Shall be great.* Shall be eminent, or distinguished as a preacher. ¶ *In the sight of the Lord.* Greek: *before the Lord.* That is, shall be really or truly great. God shall regard him as such. ¶ *Shall drink neither wine.* Wine was the juice of the grape. The kind of wine commonly used in Judea was a light wine, often not stronger than cider in this country. It was the common drink of all classes of the people. See Notes on John ii. 11. The use of wine was forbidden only to the Nazarite. Num. vi. 3. It was because John sustained this character, that he abstained from the use of wine. ¶ *Strong drink.* It is not easy to ascertain precisely what is meant by this word, but we are certain that it does not mean strong drink in our sense of the term. Distilled spirits were not then known. The art of distilling was discovered by an Arabian chemist in the ninth or tenth century; but distilled liquors are not used by Arabians. They banished them at once, as if sensible of their pernicious influence. Nor are they used in eastern nations at all. Europe and America have been the regions where this poison has been most extensively used; and there it has beggared and ruined millions, and is yearly sweeping thousands unprepared into a wretched eternity. The strong drink among the Jews was probably nothing more than

he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even <sup>1</sup> from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17 And <sup>2</sup> he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to

<sup>1</sup> Jer. i. 5.    <sup>2</sup> John i. 34.

mented liquors, or a drink obtained from fermented dates, figs, and the juice of the palm, or the lees of wine, mingled with sugar, and having the property of producing intoxication. Many of the Jewish writers say, that by the word here translated *strong drink* was meant nothing more than old wine, which probably had the power of producing intoxication. See Notes on Isa. v. 11. ¶ *Shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, &c.* Shall be divinely designated or appointed to this office, and qualified for it by all needful communications of the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Holy Spirit, is to be regenerated, sanctified, and guided by his influence. In this place the reference is: 1. To the divine intention that John should be apart to this work, as God designed that Paul should be an apostle from his mother's womb. Gal. i. 15. 2. To an actual fitting of John for the work from the Spirit, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, as was the case with Jeremiah, Jer. i. 5, and with David, Psa. xxii. 9, 10.

16. *Children of Israel.* Jews. Descendants of Israel, or Jacob. ¶ *Shall turn.* By repentance. He shall call them from their sin, and persuade them to forsake it, and to seek the Lord their God.

17. *Shall go before him.* Before the Messiah, or the Lord Jesus. The connection here leads us to suppose that the word *him* refers to the Lord their God in the previous verse. If so, then it will follow that the Messiah was the Lord of Israel:—a character abundantly seen in him in other parts of the New Testament. ¶ *In the spirit and power of Elias.* See Note, Matt. xi. 14. ¶ *To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.* In the time of John the Jews were divided into a number of different sects. See Notes on Matt. iii. 7. They were opposed violently to each other,

turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient <sup>3</sup> to the wisdom <sup>4</sup> of the just; to make ready a people <sup>5</sup> prepared for the Lord.

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this?

<sup>3</sup> Or, by. Psa. cxi. 10. Mal. iv. 5, 6. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xi. 14; xix. 28. Mark ix. 12. Rom. iv. 21. <sup>5</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 9.

and pursued their opposition with great animosity. It was impossible but that this opposition should find its way into families, and divide parents and children from each other. John came that he might allay these animosities, and produce better feeling. By directing them all to one Master, the Messiah, he would divert attention from the causes of their difference, and bring them to union. He would restore peace to their families, and reconcile those parents and children who had chosen different sects, suffering their attachment to sect to interrupt the harmony of their households. The effect of true religion on a family will always be to produce harmony. It attaches all the family to one great Master, and by attachment to him, all minor causes of difference are forgotten. ¶ *And the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.* The *disobedient* here are the unbelieving, and hence the impious, the wicked. These he would turn to the wisdom of the just, or to such wisdom as the just or pious manifested; that is, to true wisdom. ¶ *To make ready a people, &c.* To prepare them, by announcing that the Messiah was about to appear, and by calling them to repentance, that they might be prepared for his coming. God has always required men to be pure in a special manner, when he was about to appear among them. Thus the Israelites were required to purify themselves for three days when he was about to come down on Mount Sinai. Exod. xix. 14, 15. And so when God the Son was about to appear as the Redeemer, he required that men should prepare themselves for his coming. So in view of the future judgment, the second coming of the Son of man, he requires that men should repent, believe, and be pure. 1 Pet. iv. 7. 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.

18. *Whereby shall I know this?* The

for<sup>1</sup> I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel,<sup>2</sup> that stand in the presence of God; and am sent<sup>3</sup> to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 And, behold, thou shalt be<sup>4</sup> dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xv. 8; xvii. 17; xviii. 12. Judg. vi. 36-40. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 26. Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21, 22. <sup>3</sup> Heb. i. 14. <sup>4</sup> Ezek. iii. 26.

thing was improbable, and he desired evidence that this would take place. The testimony of an angel, and in such a place, should have been proof enough, but men are slow to believe the testimony of heavenly messengers. As a consequence of not believing, he was struck dumb.

19. *I am Gabriel.* The word *Gabriel* is made up of two Hebrew words, and signifies man of God. This angel is mentioned as having been deputed to inform Daniel that his prayers were heard. Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21. ¶ *That stand in the presence of God.* To stand in the presence of one, is a phrase denoting honour or favour. To be admitted to the presence of a king, or to be with him, was a token of favour. So to stand before God, signifies merely that he was honoured or favoured by God. He was permitted to come near him, and to see much of his glory. Compare 1 Kin. x. 8; xii. 6; xvii. 1; Prov. xxii. 29. ¶ *And am sent,* &c. The angels are ministering spirits sent forth to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Heb. i. 7, 14. They delight to do the will of God, and one way of doing that will is by aiding his children here; by succouring the afflicted; and by defending those who are in danger. There is no more absurdity or impropriety in supposing that angels may aid them, than there is in supposing that good men may aid one another. And there can be no doubt that it affords high pleasure to the angels of God to be permitted to aid those who are treading the dangerous and trying path which leads to eternity. Holiness is the same as benevolence; and holy

performed, because thou believest not my words,<sup>5</sup> which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them and remained speechless.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. iii. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Heb. vi. 18.

beings seek and love opportunities to do good to their fellow creatures. In the eye of holy beings, all God's creatures are parts of one great family; and whenever they can do them good, they rejoice in the opportunity, at any sacrifice. ¶ *These glad tidings.* This good news respecting the birth of a son.

20. *Because thou believest not,* &c. This was both a sign and a judgment; a sign that he had come from God, and that the thing would be fulfilled, and a judgment for not giving credit to what he had said. There is no sin in the sight of God more aggravated than unbelief. When God speaks, man should believe. Nor can he that will not believe escape punishment. God speaks only truth, and we should believe him. God speaks only what is for our good, and it is right that we should suffer if we do not credit what he says.

21. *The people waited.* That is, beyond the usual time. ¶ *Marvelled.* Wondered. The priest, it is said, was not accustomed to remain in the temple more than half an hour commonly. Having remained on this occasion a longer time, the people became apprehensive for his safety, and wondered what had happened to him.

22. *Had seen a vision.* The word *vision* means sight, appearance or spectre, and is commonly applied to spirits, or to beings of another world. When he came out of the temple, it is probable that they suspected that something of this nature had detained him there, and that on inquiry of him he signified by a nod that this was the case. He was unable to speak, and they had no way of "perceiv-

23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the <sup>1</sup> days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take <sup>2</sup> away my reproach among men.

26 And in the sixth month the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. xi. 5-7. 1 Chron. ix. 25. <sup>2</sup> Gen. ix. 23. 1 Sam. i. 6. Isa. lrv. 1, 4.

g" it but by such a sign. On the word *sign*, see Notes on Isa. i. 1. ¶ *For he reckoned unto them.* That is, by beckoning unto them, or by a sign, he informed them of what he had seen.

23. *As soon as the days of his ministration, &c.* As soon as he had fulfilled the duties of the week. It might have been supposed that the extraordinary concurrence in the temple, together with his own calamity, would have induced him at once to leave this place, and return home. But his duty was in the temple. His piety prompted him to remain there in the service of God. He was not unfitted for burning incense by his dumbness, and it was not proper for him to leave his post. It is the duty of ministers of religion to remain at their work until they are entirely unfitted for it, and unable to serve God in their profession. Then they must retire. But until that time, he that trifling causes forsakes his post, is guilty of unfaithfulness to his Master.

24. *Hide herself.* Did not go forth into public, and concealed her condition. This might have been done that she might spend her time more entirely in giving praise to God for his mercies; and that she might have the fullest proof of the accomplishment of the promise, before she appeared in public, or spoke of the cries of God.

25. *Thus.* In this merciful manner. *To take away my reproach.* Among the Jews, a family of children was counted a great blessing, an evidence of the favour of God. Lev. xxvi. 9. Psa. cxlii. 9; cxviii. 3. Isa. iv. 1; xlv. 3, 4. To be men, therefore, or to be destitute of

angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin <sup>3</sup> espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said. Hail, *thou that art* <sup>4</sup> highly favoured, <sup>5</sup> the <sup>6</sup> Lord is with thee: blessed *art thou among women.*

<sup>3</sup> Matt. i. 18. <sup>4</sup> Or, graciously accepted; or, much graced. <sup>5</sup> Dan. ix. 23. <sup>6</sup> Judg. vi. 12.

children, was considered a reproach, or a disgrace. 1 Sam. i. 6.

26. *Is the sixth month.* The sixth month after Elisabeth's conception. ¶ *A city of Galilee, named Nazareth.* See Matt. ii. 22, 23.

27. *To a virgin espoused, &c.* See Matt. i. 18, 19. ¶ *House of David.* Family of David, or descendants of David.

28. *Hail.* This word of salutation is equivalent to, Peace be with thee, or, Joy be with thee; a form of speech implying that she was signally favoured, and expressing joy at meeting her. ¶ *Highly favoured.* By being the mother of the long-expected Messiah, the mother of the Redeemer of mankind. Long had he been predicted, long had the eyes of the nation been turned to him, and long had his coming been an object of intense desire. To be reckoned among his ancestors was accounted sufficient honour for even Abraham and David. But now the happy individual was designated who was to be his mother; and on Mary, a poor virgin of Nazareth, was to come this honour, which would have rendered infinitely illustrious any of the daughters of Adam, the honour of giving birth to the world's Redeemer, and the Son of God. ¶ *The Lord is with thee.* The word *is* is not in the original, and the passage may be rendered either, the Lord *is* with thee, or, the Lord *be* with thee, implying the prayer of the angel, that all blessings from God might descend and rest upon her. ¶ *Blessed art thou among women.* This passage is equivalent to saying, Thou art the most happy of women.

29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And, behold, thou<sup>1</sup> shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great,<sup>2</sup> and shall be called the<sup>3</sup> Son of the Highest:

<sup>1</sup> Isa. vii. 14. Matt. i. 21. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xii. 42.  
<sup>3</sup> Heb. i. 2—8.

29. *Troubled at his saying.* Disturbed or perplexed at what he said. It was so unexpected, so sudden, so extraordinary, and was so high an honour, that she was filled with anxious thoughts, and did not know what to make of it. ¶ *Cast in her mind.* Thought, or revolved in her mind. ¶ *What manner of salutation.* What this salutation could mean.

32. *He shall be great.* There is undoubted reference in this passage to Isa. ix. 6, 7. By his being *great*, is meant he shall be distinguished, or illustrious; great in power, in wisdom, in dominion, on earth, and in heaven. ¶ *Shall be called.* This is the same as to say, he shall be the Son, &c. The Hebrews often used this form of speech. See Matt. xxi. 13. ¶ *The Highest.* God, who is infinitely exalted, called the Highest, because he is exalted over all his creatures on earth and in heaven. See Mark v. 7. ¶ *The throne.* The kingdom; or shall appoint him as the lineal successor of David in the kingdom. ¶ *His father David.* David is called his father, because Jesus was lineally descended from him. See Matt. i. 1. The promise to David was, that there should not fail a man to sit on his throne; that his throne should be perpetual; and the promise was fulfilled by exalting Jesus to be a Prince and a Saviour, and the perpetual King of his people.

33. *Over the house of Jacob.* The *house of Jacob* means the same thing as the family of Jacob, or the descendants of Jacob; i.e. the children of Israel.

and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne<sup>4</sup> of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and<sup>5</sup> of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee,

<sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 11, 12. Isa. ix. 6, 7. <sup>5</sup> Dan. vii. 14, 27. Mic. iv. 7.

This was the name by which the ancient people of God were known, and it is the same as saying that he shall reign over his own church and people for ever. This he does by giving them laws, by defending them, and by guiding them; and this he will do for ever in the kingdom of his glory. ¶ *Of his kingdom there shall be no end.* He shall reign among his people on earth until the end of time, and still be their King in heaven. His is the only kingdom that shall never have an end. He the only king that shall never lay aside his diadem and robes, and that shall never die. He the only king that can defend us from all our enemies, sustain us in death, and reward us in eternity. O how important, then, to have an interest in his kingdom; and how unimportant, compared with his favour, is the favour of all earthly monarchs!

35. *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.* See Matt. i. 18, 20. ¶ *The power of the Highest, &c.* This evidently means that the body of Jesus should be created by the direct power of God. It was not by ordinary generation; but, as the Messiah came to redeem sinners, to make atonement for others, and not for himself, it was necessary that his human nature should be pure, and freed from the corruption of the fall. God, therefore, prepared him a body by direct creation, that should be pure and holy. See Heb. x. 5. ¶ *That holy thing, &c.* That holy progeny, or child. ¶ *Shall be called the Son of God.* That is spoken in reference to the human nature of Christ. And this

therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called <sup>1</sup> Son of God.

36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a child in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was hitherto barren.

37 For <sup>2</sup> with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid <sup>3</sup> of the Lord; be it unto me according <sup>4</sup> to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into <sup>5</sup> a city of Judaea;

40 And entered into the house

of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed <sup>6</sup> art thou among women, and <sup>7</sup> blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord <sup>8</sup> should come to me?

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

Mark i. 1. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 26. <sup>3</sup> Psal. cxvii. <sup>4</sup> Psal. cxix. 38. <sup>5</sup> Josh. xxi. 9—11.

<sup>6</sup> Ver. 29. Judg. v. 24. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xix. 38. Gen. xxii. 18. Psal. lxxii. 17—19. <sup>8</sup> John xiii. 13.

age proves beyond controversy that the reason why Jesus was called the Son of God, was, because he was begotten in a supernatural manner. He is also called Son of God, on account of his resurrection. Acts xiii. 33, Rom. i. 4, compared with Psal. ii. 7.

36, 37. *Thy cousin Elisabeth, &c.* The name of Elisabeth is mentioned to inspire Mary with confidence, and to assure her that what was now promised would be fulfilled. It was almost as improbable that Elisabeth should have a child at her advanced age, as it was that Mary should bear the circumstances promised.

38. *And Mary said, Behold the handmaid, &c.* This was an expression of submission to the will of God, and of faith in the promise. To be the handmaid of the Lord, is to be a submissive and obedient servant; and is the same as saying, I fully credit all that is said, I am perfectly ready to obey all the commands of the Lord.

39. *And Mary arose.* The word *arose* is equivalent to setting out, or starting on a journey. ¶ *The hill country.* A region in the vicinity of Jerusalem, commonly called the hill country of Judaea. ¶ *City of Judaea.* What city is meant is not known. Some have supposed it to be Jerusalem, others Hebron. All is conjecture. It was probably a

Levitical city, and the residence of Zacharias when he was not employed in the temple.

40. *Saluted Elisabeth.* Expressed great joy and gratification at seeing her, and used the customary tokens of affectionate salutation.

41. *Filled with the Holy Ghost.* The meaning of this seems to be, that she was filled with joy, with a disposition to praise God, with a prophetic spirit, or a knowledge of the character of the child that should be born of her. All these were produced by the Holy Ghost.

42. *Blessed art thou among women.* She here repeated nearly the words of the angel to Mary, esteeming it to be the highest honour among mothers to be the mother of the Messiah.

43. *And whence is this to me?* An expression of humility. Why is it that the mother of my Lord should come to me, as if to honour me? ¶ *Mother of my Lord.* The word *Lord* sometimes denotes divinity, and sometimes superior, master, teacher, or governor. It was given by the Jews to their expected Messiah; but whether they understood it as denoting divinity, cannot now be ascertained. It is clear only that Elisabeth used it as denoting great dignity and honour.

45. *Blessed is she that believed.* That is, Mary, who believed what the angel



45 And blessed is she <sup>1</sup> that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My <sup>2</sup> soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced <sup>3</sup> in God my Saviour.

<sup>1</sup> Or, which believed that there shall be. <sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 1. Ps. xxxiv. 2, 3. <sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxv. 9. Hab. iii. 18.

spoke to her. She was blessed not only in the act of believing, but because the thing promised would certainly be fulfilled.

From these expressions of Elisabeth, we may learn: 1. That the spirit of prophecy had not entirely ceased among the Jews. 2. That the Holy Ghost is the source of light, comfort, and joy. 3. That every thing about the birth of Jesus is remarkable, and that he must have been more than a mere man. 4. That the prospect of the coming of the Messiah was one of great joy and rejoicing to ancient saints; and, 5. That it was a high honour to be the mother of him that should redeem mankind. It is from that honour that the Roman Catholics have determined that it is right to worship the Virgin Mary, and to offer prayers to her: an act of worship as idolatrous as any that could be offered to a creature. For: 1. It is not anywhere commanded in the Bible. 2. It is expressly forbidden to worship any being but God. Ex. xx. 4, 5; xxxiv. 14. Deut. vi. 13, 14. Isa. xlv. 20. 3. It is idolatry to worship or pray to a creature. 4. It is absurd to suppose that the Virgin Mary can be in all places at the same time, to hear the prayers of thousands at once, or that she can aid them. There is no idolatry more gross, and of course more wicked, than to worship the creature more than the Creator. Rom. i. 25.

46. *My soul doth magnify the Lord.* To magnify here means to make great, and then to extol, to praise, to celebrate. It does not mean here strictly to make great, but to increase in our estimation; that is, to praise, or extol. See 2 Sam. vii. 26. Ps. xxxiv. 3.

47. *In God my Saviour.* God is called Saviour, as he saves people from sin and death. He was Mary's Saviour, as he had redeemed her soul, and given a title to

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, be hold, from henceforth all generations shall call me <sup>5</sup> blessed.

49 For he that is mighty <sup>6</sup> hath done to me great things; <sup>7</sup> and holy <sup>8</sup> is his name.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxxxvi. 22. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xi. 27. Mal. iii. 12. <sup>6</sup> Gen. xvii. 1. <sup>7</sup> Ps. lxxi. 21; cxxxv. 2, 3. Eph. iii. 20. <sup>8</sup> Ps. cxi. 8.

eternal life; and she rejoiced for that, and especially for his mercy in honouring her by her being made the mother of the Messiah.

48. *He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.* Literally, he has looked upon the low or humble condition of his handmaid. That is, notwithstanding the humble rank and poverty of Mary, he has shown her favour. And this example abundantly teaches, what is elsewhere fully taught in the Bible, that God is not a respecter of persons; that he is not influenced, to confer favours, by wealth, honour, or office. Rom. ii. 11; x. 11, 12. He seeks out the humble and the contrite; and imparts his rich blessings to those who feel that they need them, and who will bless him for them. Ps. cxxxviii. 6. Isa. lvii. 15. ¶ *From henceforth.* Hereafter, or in consequence of this. ¶ *All generations.* All men. All posterity. ¶ *Call me blessed.* Pronounce me highly favoured, or happy in being the mother of the Messiah. It is right to consider her highly favoured, or happy; but this certainly does not warrant us to worship her, or pray to her. Abraham was blessed in being the father of the faithful; Paul is being the apostle to the Gentiles; Peter is first preaching the gospel to them; but who would think of worshipping or praying to Abraham, Paul, or Peter?

49. *He that is mighty.* God. ¶ *Hath done to me great things.* Hath conferred on me great favours and distinguished mercies. ¶ *And holy is his name.* This is an expression of Mary's feelings, desiring to give to God all honour and praise; and as the highest honour she declared that his name was holy; that is, that God was free from sin, injustice, and impurity. The name of God is often put for God himself. The proper name of God is Jehovah, a word expressive of his

50 And <sup>1</sup> his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

51 He <sup>2</sup> hath shewed strength

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xvii. 7. Exod. xx. 6. Psa. ciii. 17.  
<sup>2</sup> Psa. xcvi. 1. Isa. li. 9; lli. 10; lxiii. 5.

essential being, derived from the word which signifies to be. Ex. iii. 14; vi. 3. Psa. lxxxiii. 18. That name is holy; is to be regarded as holy; and to make a common or profane use of it, is solemnly forbidden in the third commandment. Ex. xx. 7.

50. *His mercy.* Favour shown to the miserable and the guilty. ¶ *Is on them.* Is showed or manifested to them. ¶ *That fear him.* That reverence or honour him. One kind of fear is that which a servant has of a cruel master, or a man has of a precipice, the plague, or death. This is not the fear which we ought to have of God. This fear of God is like that which a dutiful child has of a kind and virtuous father—a fear of injuring his feelings; of dishonouring him by our life; of doing any thing which he would disapprove. It is on those who have such fear of God that his mercy descends. This is the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom. Psa. cxi. 10. Job xxviii. 28. ¶ *From generation to generation.* From one age to another. That is, it is unceasing; it continues and abounds. But it means also more than this. It means, that God's mercy will descend on the children, and children's children, of those that fear him, and keep his commandments. Ex. xx. 6. In this respect it is an unspeakable privilege to be descended of pious parents, to have been the subject of their prayers, and to have received their blessing. And it is also a matter of vast guilt not to copy their example, and to walk in their steps. If God is disposed to show mercy to thousands of generations, how heavy will be the condemnation if they do not avail themselves of it, and early seek his favour.

51. *Hath showed strength with his arm.* The arm is the symbol of strength. The expression in this and the subsequent verses, has no particular reference to his mercy to Mary. From a contemplation of his goodness to her, she enlarges her views to a contemplation of his goodness and power in general to others, and to a

celebration of the praises of God, for all that he has done to all men. This is the nature of true piety. It does not terminate in thinking of God's mercy to us. It thinks of others, it spreads in contemplation of other objects, and praises God that others also are made partakers of his mercy, and that his goodness is manifested to all his works. ¶ *He hath scattered the proud.* He hath often done it in time of battle and war. When the proud Assyrian, Egyptian, or Babylonian had come against the people of God, he had often scattered them, and driven away their armies. ¶ *In the imagination of their hearts.* Those who were lifted up or exalted, in their own view. Those who thought themselves to be superior to other men.

52 He <sup>4</sup> hath put down the

<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 9. Dan. iv. 37. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xviii. 14. Job v. 11.

52. *Hath put down the mighty.* The mighty here denotes princes, kings, or conquerors. See Isa. xiv. 12—14. ¶ *Their seats.* Their thrones, or the places where they sat in pomp and power. ¶ *Exalted them.* Raised them up, or placed them in the seats of those who had been removed. ¶ *Low degree.* Low, or humble birth and condition in life. This probably has reference to the case of Saul and David. Mary was celebrating the mercies of God to her, to her family, and of course to her ancestors. It was natural to allude to that great event in their history, when Saul was overcome in battle, and when David was taken from the sheep-fold, and placed on the throne. The origin of illustrious families is often obscure. Men are often raised by industry, talent, and the favour of God, from very humble stations; from the farm, or mechanics' shop, to places of great trust in the church or in the state. They who are thus elevated, if imbued with right feelings, will not despise their former employments, nor their former companions, nor will they esteem their parents or friends the less, because they still remain in the same rank in life. No conduct is more odious and unchristian than to be ashamed of our birth, or the humble circumstances of our friends.

mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He <sup>1</sup> hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in <sup>2</sup> remembrance of his mercy;

55 As he spake <sup>3</sup> to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

57 Now Elisabeth's full time

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 5.    <sup>2</sup> Psa. cxviii. 3.    <sup>3</sup> Gen. xvii. 19.    Psa. cxxxiii. 11.

53. *The hungry with good things.* This is a celebration of the general mercy of God. He daily fed the poor, the needy, and those who came to him with humble hearts. ¶ *The rich hath he sent, &c.* While the poor come to him for a supply of their daily wants, the rich come not that their necessities may be supplied, but come with lofty hearts, and insatiable desires, that their riches may be increased. When this is the case, God not unfrequently not only withholds what they ask, but he takes their riches away by fire, or flood, or disappointments, and sends them away empty. Prov. xxiii. 5. It is better to be poor, and go to God for our daily bread, than to be rich, and forget our dependence on him, and to seek only a great increase of our property.

54. *Hath holpen.* Hath helped or assisted. The word rendered *holpen*, denotes, properly, to take hold of one, to help him up when he is danger of falling, and means here that God had succoured his people when they were feeble, and were in danger of falling or being overthrown. ¶ *His servant Israel.* His people, the Israelites, or those who truly feared him and kept his commandments. See Isa. xli. 8, 9. Hos. xi. 1. ¶ *In remembrance of his mercy.* Or that his mercy may be remembered.

55. *As he spake to our fathers, &c.* That is, he has dealt mercifully with the children of Israel, according as he promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The promise particularly here referred to, is

came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours <sup>4</sup> and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; and they <sup>5</sup> rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

<sup>4</sup> Ruth iv. 14—17.    Psa. cxlii. 2.    <sup>5</sup> Ver. 16.    Gen. xxi. 6.    Isa. lxvi. 9, 10.

that respecting the Messiah, which was now about to be fulfilled. But there is no doubt that there were also included the promises respecting all the other mercies which had been conferred on the children of Israel. See Gen. xxii. 17, 18. ¶ *For ever.* These words are to be referred to the preceding verse, "in remembrance of his mercy for ever, as he spake," &c. They denote that the mercy of God manifested to his people should be had in everlasting remembrance.

There is a striking similarity between this song of praise by Mary, and that spoken by Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. 1—10. There are few pieces of poetry—for this is poetry, and almost the only poetry in the New Testament—more beautiful than this. It is the language of an humble, thankful, pious female heart, praising God, 1. For his mercy to her, ver. 46—49; 2. For his mercy to all men—his general goodness, ver. 50—53; and, 3. His special goodness to his people, ver. 54, 55.

59. *On the eighth day.* This was the day on which it was required to circumcise children. Gen. xxi. 4. ¶ *And they called him Zacharias.* The name of the child was commonly given at the time of the circumcision. Gen. xxi. 3, 4. The name commonly given to the eldest son was that of the father.

60. *Shall be called John.* This was the name which the angel had said should be given to him, and which Zacharias had probably informed Elisabeth by writing.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, His name is <sup>1</sup>John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth <sup>2</sup>was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them : and all

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 13.    <sup>2</sup> Ver. 20.

61. *There is none of thy kindred, &c.* The Jewish tribes and families were kept distinct. To do this, and to avoid confusion in their genealogical tables, they probably gave only those names which were found among their ancestors. Another reason for this, common to all people, is the respect which is felt for honoured parents and ancestors.

63. *He asked. That is, by signs.* ¶ *A writing table.* The table, denoted by his word, was made of pine, and covered with wax, and was small, perhaps as large as a sheet of paper. The ancients used to write on such tables, as they had not the use of paper. The instrument used for writing was an iron pen or stile, by which they marked on the wax which covered the table. Sometimes the writing table was made entirely of lead.

64. *His mouth was opened, &c.* That he was enabled to speak. For nine months he had been dumb, and it is probable that they supposed him to be afflicted with a paralytic affection, and that he would not recover. Hence their amazement when he spoke. For one act of disbelief, all this calamity had come upon him, and it had not come without effect. With true gratitude, he offered praise to God for the birth of a son, and for his restoration to the blessings of speech.

65. *And fear came, &c.* The word *fear* often denotes religious reverence. The remarkable circumstances attending the birth of John, and the fact that Zacharias was suddenly restored to speech,

these <sup>3</sup> sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.

66 And all they that heard *them* laid *them* up <sup>4</sup> in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be ! And the hand <sup>5</sup> of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 Blessed <sup>6</sup> be the Lord God of Israel ; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

<sup>3</sup> Or, *things.*    <sup>4</sup> Ch. ii. 19, 51.    <sup>5</sup> Psa. lxxx. 17.    <sup>6</sup> Psa. lxxii. 18.

convinced them that God was there, and filled their minds with awe and veneration.

66. *What manner of child, &c.* Such were the remarkable circumstances of his birth, that they apprehended he would be distinguished as a prophet, or that great events would result from his life. ¶ *The hand of the Lord was with him.* The word *hand* is used to denote aid, protection, favour. We stretch out the hand to aid those whom we wish to help. The expression then means that God aided him, protected him, or showed him favour. Some think that these words are a part of the speech of the neighbours ; 'What manner of child shall this be ! God is so evidently with him !'

67. *Filled with the Holy Ghost.* See ver. 15. ¶ *And prophesied.* The word *prophesied* means, 1. To foretell future events. 2. To celebrate the praises of God, see 1 Sam. x. 5, 6 ; 1 Kin. xviii. 29 ; then to teach, or preach the gospel, &c. This song of Zacharias partakes of all. It is principally employed in the praises of God, but it also predicts the future character and preaching of John.

68. *Blessed.* See Note, Matt. v. 3. ¶ *Hath visited.* The word here rendered *visited* means properly to look upon, then to look upon in order to know the state of any one, then to visit for the purpose of aiding those who need aid, or alleviating misery. Compare Matt. xxv. 43. In this sense it is used here. God looked upon the world, he saw it miserable, he came to relieve it, and brought salvation.

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation<sup>1</sup> for us in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake<sup>2</sup> by the mouth

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cxi. 2. ix. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Dan.

¶ *And redeemed.* That is, was about to redeem, or had given the pledge that he would redeem. This was spoken under the belief that the Messiah, the Redeemer, was about to appear, and would certainly accomplish his work. The literal translation of this passage is: He hath made redemption, or ransom for his people. A ransom is the price paid to deliver a captive taken in war. A is a prisoner taken in war by B. B has a right to detain him a prisoner by the laws of war, but C offers B a price if he will release A, and suffer him to go at liberty. The price which he pays, and which must be satisfactory to B, that is, be a reason to B why he should release him, is called a price or ransom. Men are sinners. They are bound over to just punishment by the law. The law is holy, and God, as a just governor, must see that the law is honoured, and the wicked punished. But if any thing can be done which will have the same good effect as the punishment of the sinner, or will be an equivalent for it, that is, be of equal value to the universe, God may consistently release him. If he can show the same hatred of sin, and deter others from sinning, and accomplish the purity of the sinner, the sinner may be released. Whatever will accomplish this is called a ransom, because it is in the eye of God a sufficient reason why the sinner should not be punished; it is an equivalent for his sufferings, and God is satisfied. The blood of Jesus, i. e. his death, in the place of sinners, constitutes such a ransom. It is in their stead. It is for them. It is equivalent to their punishment. It is not itself a punishment, for that always supposes personal crime, but it is what God is pleased to accept in the place of eternal sufferings of the sinner. The king of the Locrians made a law that an adulterer should be punished with the loss of his eyes. His son was the first offender, and the father decreed that his son should lose one eye, and he himself one also. This was the ransom. He showed his love, his regard for the honour of his law, and the

of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That we should be saved<sup>3</sup> from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

<sup>3</sup> Isa. li. 7—17. Jer. xxx. 10, 11.

determination that the guilty should not escape. So God gave his Son a ransom to show his love, his regard for justice, and his willingness to save men, and his Son, in his death, was the ransom. He is often so called in the New Testament, Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. Heb. ix. 12. Tit. ii. 14. For a fuller view of the nature of a ransom, see Notes on Rom. iii. 24, 25.

69. *And hath raised up a horn.* A horn is a symbol of strength. The figure is taken from the fact that in horned animals the strength lies in the horn. Particularly the great power of the rhinoceros or unicorn, is manifested by the use of a single horn of great strength, placed on the head, near the end of the nose. When the sacred writers therefore speak of great strength they often use the word horn. Deut. xxxiii. 17. Psa. cxlviii. 14. Dan. vii. 7, 8; viii. 21. The word *salvation*, connected here with the word horn, means that this strength, or this mighty Redeemer, was able to save. It is possible that this whole figure may be taken from the Jewish altar. On each of the four corners of the altar there was an eminence, or small projection, called a horn. To this persons might flee for safety, when in danger, and were safe. 1 Kin. i. 50; ii. 28. Comp. Note on ch. i. 11. So the Redeemer may be called the *horn of salvation*, because those who flee to him are safe. ¶ *In the house.* In the family, or among the descendants of David.

70. *His holy prophets, &c.* All the prophets are said to have alluded to the Messiah from the beginning of the world. The most striking of these were Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10; Moses, Deut. xviii. 15; Isaiah, ch. ix. 6, 7; liii. ¶ *Since the world began.* This is not to be taken literally, for there were no prophets immediately after the creation. It is merely a general expression, designed to denote that all the prophets had predicted the coming of the Messiah.

71. *Saved from our enemies.* The enemies of man are his sins, his carnal propensities, his lusts, and the great ad-

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to <sup>1</sup>remember his holy covenant,

73 The oath <sup>2</sup> which he swore to *our father Abraham*,

74 That he would grant unto us, at we being delivered out of the *hand* of our enemies might serve *him* <sup>3</sup>without fear,

75 In <sup>4</sup>holiness and righteous-

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xxvi. 42. <sup>2</sup> Psa. cv. 8-10. Ezek. xvi. 1. <sup>3</sup> Gen. xxii. 16, 17. <sup>4</sup> Rom. vi. 22. <sup>5</sup> Tit. 11, 12. <sup>6</sup> 1 Pet. i. 14, 15.

many Satan and his angels, that continually seek to destroy him. From *the* the Messiah came to save us. Compare Gen. iii. 15. Matt. i. 21. ¶ *The* *word*. The power, to save us from them.

72. To perform the mercy. To show *the* mercy promised. The expression in *the* original is to make mercy with our *thers*; i. e., to show kindness to our *thers*. And the propriety of it is *unded* on the fact that mercy to children is regarded as kindness to the parent. *lessing* the children was blessing the *tion*, was fulfilling the promises made *the* fathers, and showing that he *red* them in mercy. ¶ *His holy* *covenant*. The word *covenant* means *compact*, or agreement. This is its use *ong* men. It implies equality in the *rties*; freedom from constraint; freedom *an* previous obligation to do the thing *re* *covenanted*; and freedom from *ob*tion to enter into a compact, unless a *an* chooses so to do. Such a transaction evidently can never take place *etween* man and God, for they are not *ual*. Man is not at liberty to decline *at* God proposes, and he is under *ob*tion to do all that God commands. *hen* the word *covenant*, therefore, is used *the* Bible, it means sometimes a *command*, sometimes a promise, sometimes a *gular* law, as "the covenant of the day *d* night;" sometimes it means the way *which* God dispenses mercy; that is, *the* old and new covenants. In the *ace* before us it means the promise *ade* to Abraham, as the following verses *arly* show.

73. *The oath*. This oath is recorded Gen. xxii. 16, 17. It was an oath in *ich* God swore by *himself* "because he

ness before him, all <sup>5</sup>the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go <sup>6</sup>before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people <sup>7</sup>by the remission <sup>8</sup>of their sins,

<sup>5</sup> Rev. ii. 10. <sup>6</sup> Mal. iii. 1. <sup>7</sup> Or, *for*. <sup>8</sup> Acts ii. 38; iii. 19; v. 31. Rom. iii. 25; iv. 6, 8. Eph. i. 7.

could swear by no greater," Heb. vi. 13, 14, that he would surely bless Abraham and his posterity. That promise was now to be entirely fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah.

74. *Might serve him*. Might obey, honour, and worship him. This was regarded as a favour. This was what was promised. And for this Zacharias praised God. ¶ *Without fear*. Fear of death, of spiritual enemies, or of any external foes. In the sure hope of God's eternal favour beyond the grave.

75. *In holiness, &c.* In piety, and strict justice. ¶ *Before him*. In the presence of God. Performed as in his presence, and with the full consciousness that God sees the heart. The holiness was not to be merely external, but spiritual, internal, pure, such as God would see and approve. ¶ *All the days of our life*. To death. True religion increases and expands till death.

76. *And thou, child, &c.* Zacharias predicts in this and the following verses, the dignity, the employment, and the success of John. He declares what would be the subject of his preaching, and what his success. ¶ *Prophet of the Highest*. Prophet of God; a prophet appointed by God to declare his will, and to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah. ¶ *The face of the Lord*. The Lord Jesus, the Messiah that was about to appear. To go before the face of one, is the same as to go immediately before one, or to be immediately followed by another. ¶ *To prepare his ways*. This is taken from Isa. xl. 3. See Note on Matt. iii. 3, and on Isa. xl. 3.

77. *Knowledge of salvation*. Knowledge of the way of salvation; that it

78 Through the tender <sup>1</sup> mercy of our God; whereby the <sup>2</sup> day-spring from on high hath visited us,

79 To <sup>3</sup> give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *bowls of the mercy.* <sup>2</sup> Or, *sun-rising*; or, *branch.* Isa. xl. 1. Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12. <sup>3</sup> Ch. ii. 32. Isa. ix. 2; xlix. 9; lx. 1-3. Acts xxvi. 18. 1 Thes. v. 4, 5. 1 John i. 5-7.

was provided, and that the author of salvation was about to appear. ¶ *By the remission of their sins.* The word *remission* means pardon, forgiveness, or it denotes a treatment of the sinner, as if he had not committed the sin. This implies that the salvation about to be offered was that which was connected with the pardon of sin. There can be no other. God cannot treat men as his friends unless they come to him by repentance and obtain forgiveness. When that is obtained, which he is always disposed to grant, they can be treated with kindness and mercy.

78. *Whereby the day-spring, &c.* The word *day-spring* means the morning light, the aurora, the rising of the sun. It is called the *day-spring from on high*, because the light of the gospel shines forth from heaven. God is its author, and through his mercy it shines on men. There is here, doubtless, a reference to Isa. lx. 1, 2; indeed, almost the very words of that place are quoted. Compare also Rev. xxii. 16.

79. *To give light, &c.* See Note, Matt. iv. 16. ¶ *To guide our feet, &c.* The figure in these verses is taken from travellers, who being overtaken by night know not what to do, and who wait patiently for the morning light, that they may know which way to go. So man wandered. So he became benighted. So he sat in the shadow of death. So he knew not which way to go until the Sun of righteousness arose, and then the light shone brightly on his way, and the road was open to the promised land of heaven.

## CHAPTER II.

*Joseph and Mary at Bethlehem, 1-6. Jesus born, 6, 7. The shepherd told of his birth, 8-12. The angel's song, 13, 14. The shepherd's visit, 15-20. Mary, with her babe at the temple, 21-24. Simeon and Anna rejoice over the babe, 25-39. Return of Joseph and Mary with the babe to Nazareth, 40-52.*

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from <sup>4</sup> Cæsar Augustus, that <sup>5</sup> all the world should <sup>6</sup> be taxed.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 1. Acts xi. 28; xxv. 11, 21. Phil. iv. 22. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxiv. 14. Mark xiv. 9. Rom. i. 8. <sup>6</sup> Or, *enrolled.*

This song of Zacharias is exceedingly beautiful. It expresses with elegance the great points of the plan of redemption, the doings of John, and the mercy of God in providing that plan. That mercy was great. It is worthy of praise; of our highest, loftiest songs of thanksgiving; for we were in the shadow of death, sinful, wretched, wandering, and the light arose, the gospel came, and men may rejoice in hope of eternal life.

80. *Waxed strong in spirit.* That is, in courage, understanding, and purposes of good, fitting him for his future work. The word *wax* means to increase, to grow, from an old Saxon word. ¶ *In the deserts.* In Hebron, and in the hill country where his father resided. He resided in obscurity, and was not known publicly by the people. ¶ *Until the day of his showing.* Until he entered on his public ministry as recorded in Matt. iii. That is, probably, until he was about thirty years of age. See Luke iii.

## CHAPTER II.

1. *In those days.* About the time of the birth of John and of Christ. ¶ *A decree.* A law commanding a thing to be done. ¶ *Cæsar Augustus.* This was the Roman emperor. His first name was Octavianus. He was nephew of Julius Cæsar, and obtained the empire after his death. He took the name Augustus; i. e., august, or honourable, as a compliment to his own greatness; and from him the month August, which was before called Sextilis, received its name. ¶ *The* all the world. There has been much

2 (*And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.*)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

difficulty respecting this passage, from the fact that no such taxing of all the world is mentioned by ancient writers. It should have been rendered the whole land; i.e. the whole land of Palestine. The whole land is mentioned to show that it was not Judea only, but that it included also Galilee, the place where Joseph and Mary dwelt. That the passage refers only to the land of Palestine, and not to the whole world, or to all the Roman empire, is clear from the following considerations: 1. The fact that no such taxing is mentioned as pertaining to any other country. 2. The account of Luke is confined to this country only. 3. The words world, and whole world, are not unfrequently used in this limited sense as confined to a single country. See Matt. iv. 8, where Satan is said to have shown to Christ all the kingdoms of the world; that is, of the land of Judea. See also Josh. ii. 3; Luke iv. 25, Greek; Luke xxi. 26; Acts xi. 28. ¶ *Should be taxed.* Our word *tax* means to levy and raise money for the use of the government. This is not the meaning of the original word here. It means rather to enrol, or to take a list of the citizens with their employment, the amount of their property, &c., equivalent to what was meant by *census*. Judea was at this time tributary to Rome. It paid taxes to the Roman emperor; and though Herod was king, yet he held his appointment under the Roman emperor, and was subject in most matters to him. Further, as this enrolment was merely to ascertain the numbers and property of the Jews, it is probable that they were very willing to be enrolled in this manner; and hence we hear that they went willingly, without tumult, contrary to the common way when they were to be taxed.

2. *And this taxing was first made, &c.* This verse has given as much perplexity, perhaps, as any one in the New Testament. The difficulty has consisted in the fact that Cyrenius, or Quirinius, was not governor of Syria until twelve or fifteen years after the birth of Jesus. Jesus was born during the reign of Herod. At that time Varus was president of Syria.

Herod was succeeded by Archelaus, who reigned eight or nine years; and after he was removed, Judea was annexed to the province of Syria, and Cyrenius was sent as the governor. Josephus Ant. lib. xvii. § 5. The difficulty has been to reconcile this account with that in Luke. Various attempts have been made to do this. The one that seems most satisfactory is that proposed by Dr. Lardner. According to his view it means, "This was the first census of Cyrenius, governor of Syria." It is called the first, to distinguish it from one afterwards taken by Cyrenius. Acts v. 37. It is said to be the census taken by Cyrenius, governor of Syria; not that he was then governor, but that it was taken by him who was afterwards familiarly known as governor. Cyrenius, governor of Syria, was the name by which the man was known; and it was not improper to say that the taxing was made by Cyrenius, the governor of Syria, though he might not have been actually governor for many years afterwards. Thus Herodian says that "to Marcus the emperor were born several daughters and two sons," though several of those children were born to him before he was emperor. Thus it is not improper to say that the Duke of Wellington was general in India, and gained the victory of Assaye, though he was not actually made duke till some years afterwards. According to this, Augustus sent Cyrenius, an active, enterprising man, to take this census. At that time he was a Roman senator. Afterwards he was made governor of the same country, and received the title which Luke gives him. ¶ *Syria.* The region of country north of Palestine, lying between the Mediterranean and the Euphrates. The word Syria, called in the Hebrew Aram, from a son of Shem, Gen. x. 22, in its largest acceptation, extended from the Mediterranean and the river Cydnus to the Euphrates, and from mount Taurus on the north to Arabia and the border of Egypt on the south. It was divided into Syria Palestina, including Canaan and Phenicia, Cælo-Syria, between two ridges of mount Lebanon and Upper



4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem;<sup>1</sup> (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xvii. 12, 58; xx. 6. Mic. v. 2.

Syria. The last was known as Syria in a restricted sense.

The leading features in the physical aspect of Syria consist of the great mountainous chains of Lebanon, or Libanus, and Anti-Libanus, extending from north to south, and the great desert lying on the south-east and east. The valleys are of great fertility, and yield abundance of grain, vines, mulberries, tobacco, olives, excellent fruits, as oranges, figs, pistachios, &c. The climate, in the inhabited part, is exceedingly fine. Syria is inhabited by various descriptions of people, but Turks and Greeks form the basis of population in the cities. The only tribes that can be considered as peculiar to Syria are the tenants of the heights of Lebanon. The most remarkable of these are the Druses and Maronites. The general language is Arabic: the soldiers and officers of government speak Turkish. Of the old Syriac no traces exist.

4. *The city of David.* Bethlehem, called the city of David because it was the place of his birth. See Matt. ii. 1. ¶ *Because he was of the house.* Of the family. ¶ *And lineage.* The lineage denotes that he was descended from David as his father, or ancestor. In taking a Jewish census, families were kept distinct. Hence all went into the tribe to which they belonged, and to the place where their family had resided. Joseph was of the tribe of Benjamin, and of the particular family of David. Hence he went up to the city of David. It is not improbable that he might also have had a small paternal estate in Bethlehem that rendered his presence there more desirable.

7. *Her first-born son.* Whether Mary had any other children or not, has been a matter of controversy. The obvious meaning of the Bible is that she had; and

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she<sup>2</sup> brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Matt. i. 25. <sup>3</sup> Ch. x. 34. Gen. xiii. 27.

if this be the case, the word *first-born* is here to be taken in its common signification. ¶ *Swaddling clothes.* When a child among the Hebrews was born, it was washed in water, rubbed in salt, and then wrapped in swaddling clothes; that is, not garments regularly made, as with us, but bands or blankets that confined the limbs closely. Ezek. xvi. 4. There was nothing peculiar in the manner in which the infant Jesus was treated. ¶ *Laid him in a manger.* The word *manger*, in the English language, means, the box or trough in which provender is placed for horses or cattle. This is not the meaning of the word here. It means simply the stable or the place where the cattle or camels lodged. There was no room at the inn, and they were obliged to lie in the stable or barn, and it was there that the child was laid. Their being there was no proof of poverty. It was a simple matter of necessity. There was no room at the inn. It may be added that in eastern countries it is not very unusual for travellers to pass the night in this manner. In the caravansarai it is common for the whole caravan of camels, horses, and people to lodge in the same place. Indeed, the only pillow which children often have is the side of a horse, with which the whole family lie down. Horses are trained to remarkable gentleness and docility. Yet it is worthy of our consideration that Jesus was born poor. He did not inherit a princely estate. He was not cradled, as many are, in a palace. He had no rich friends. He had virtuous, pious parents, of more value to a child than many riches. And in this we are shown that it is no dishonour to be poor. Happy is that child who, whether his parents be rich or poor, has a pious father and mother. It is no matter if he has

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch<sup>1</sup> over their flock by night.

9 And, lo,<sup>2</sup> the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you<sup>3</sup> is born this

day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel<sup>4</sup> a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying.

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,<sup>5</sup> good will toward men.

Or, the night-watches. <sup>2</sup> Judg. vi. 11, 12. <sup>3</sup> xxvii. 23, 24. 1 Tim. iii. 16. <sup>4</sup> Isa. ix. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Psal. ciii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. i. 12. <sup>5</sup> Isa. lvii. 19.

as much wealth, as fine clothes, or as to build a house as another. It is enough him to be as Jesus was, and God will be him. ¶ *No room at the inn.* Many people assembled to be enrolled, and the inn was filled before Joseph and Mary arrived.

1. *The same country.* Round about Bethlehem. ¶ *Shepherds.* Men who tended flocks of sheep. ¶ *Abiding in the field.* Remaining out of doors, under the open sky, with their flocks. This was commonly done. The climate was mild, and they kept their flocks from straying, they spent the night with them. It is also a fact that the Jews sent out their flocks to the mountainous and desert regions during the summer months, and took them up in the latter part of October or the first of November, when the cold weather commenced. While away in the deserts and mountainous regions was proper that there should be some one to attend them, to keep them from straying, and from the ravages of wolves and other wild beasts. It is clear from this that our Saviour was born before the month of December, or before what we call Christmas. At that time it is cold, and especially in the high and mountainous regions about Bethlehem. God has condescended the time of his birth. There is a way to ascertain it. By different learned men it has been fixed at each month in the year. Nor was it of consequence to know the time; if it had been, God would have preserved the record of it. Matters of moment are clearly re-

vealed. Those which God regards as of no importance are concealed. ¶ *Keeping watch, &c.* More literally, tending their flocks by turns through the night-watches.

9. *The glory of the Lord.* This is the same as a great glory; that is, a splendid appearance or light. The word *glory* is often the same as light. Luke ix. 31. Acts xxii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 41. The words Lord and God are often used to denote greatness or intensity. Thus, trees of God mean great trees; hills of God, high or lofty hills, &c. So *the glory of the Lord* here means an exceedingly great or bright luminous appearance, perhaps not unlike what Paul saw on the way to Damascus.

12. *This shall be a sign, &c.* The evidence by which you shall know the child is, that you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

14. *Glory to God.* Praise be to God; or, honour be to God. That is, the praise of redeeming man is due to God. The plan of redemption will bring glory to God, and is designed to express his glory. This it does by evincing his love to men, his mercy, his condescension, and his regard to the honour of his law, and the stability of his own government. It is the highest expression of his love and mercy. Nowhere, so far as we can see, could his glory be more strikingly exhibited than in giving his only-begotten Son to die for men. ¶ *In the highest.* This is capable of several meanings: 1. In the highest strains, or in the highest possible manner. 2. Among the highest, i. e., among the angels of God, indicating that they felt a

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the<sup>1</sup> shepherds said one to another, <sup>2</sup> Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

<sup>1</sup> *The men, the shepherds.* <sup>2</sup> Exod. iii. 3. Psa. cxi. 2. John xx. 1-10.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen it, <sup>3</sup> they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 38; ch. viii. 39. Psa. lxxvi. 16. John i. 41-46

deep interest in this work, and were called on to praise God for the redemption of man. 3. In the highest heavens, indicating that the praise should not be confined to the earth, but should spread throughout the universe. 4. The words *God in the highest*, may be equivalent to the most high God, and be the same as saying, Let the most high God be praised for his love and mercy to men. Which of these meanings is the true one it is difficult to determine; but in this they all agree, that high praise is to be given to God for his love in redeeming men. O that not only angels but men would join universally in this song of praise. ¶ *On earth peace.* That is, the gospel shall bring peace. The Saviour was predicted as the Prince of peace. Isa. ix. 6. The world is at war with God; sinners are at enmity against their Maker, and against each other. There is no peace to the wicked. But Jesus came to make peace. And this he did, 1. By reconciling the world to God by his atonement. 2. By bringing the sinner to a state of peace with his Maker, inducing him to lay down the weapons of rebellion; to submit his soul to God; thus giving him the peace which passeth all understanding. 3. By diffusing in the heart universal good will to men, disposing men to lay aside their differences, to love each other, to seek each other's welfare, and to banish envy, malice, pride, lust, passion, and covetousness, in all ages the most fruitful causes of difference among men. And, 4. By diffusing the principles of universal peace among nations. If the gospel of Jesus should universally prevail, there would be an end of war. In the days of the millennium there will be universal peace; all the causes of war will have ceased; men will love each other and do justly; and nations be brought under the influence of the gospel. O how should each one

toil and pray that the great object of the gospel may be universally accomplished, and the world be filled with peace! ¶ *Good will toward men.* The gift of the Saviour is an expression of good will or love to men, and therefore God is to be praised. The work of redemption is uniformly represented as the fruit of the love of God. John iii. 16. Eph. v. 2. 1 John iv. 10. Rev. i. 5. No words can express the greatness of that love. It can only be measured by the misery, helplessness, and danger of man; by the extent of his sufferings here and in the world of woe, if he had not been saved; by the condescension, sufferings, and death of Jesus; and by the eternal honour and happiness to which he will raise his people. All these are beyond our full comprehension. Yet how little does man feel it! And how many turn away from the highest love of God, and treat him with contempt! Surely, if God so loved us first, we ought also to love him. 1 John iv. 19.

15. *Unto Bethlehem.* The city of David, where the angel had told them they would find the Saviour. These shepherds appear to have been pious men. They were waiting for the coming of the Messiah. On the first intimation that he had actually appeared, they went with haste to find him. So all men should, without delay, seek the Saviour. When told of him by the servants of God, they should, like these shepherds, forsake all, and give no rest to their eyes until they have found him. We may always find him. We need not to travel to Bethlehem. We have only to cast our eyes to heaven; to look unto him and to believe on him, and we shall find him ever near to us, and for ever our Saviour and friend.

17. *When they had seen it.* When they had satisfied themselves of the truth of the coming of the Messiah, and had

18 And all they that heard it ordered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

certained that they could not have been taken in the appearance of the angels. There was evidence enough to satisfy them that what the angels said was true, or they would not have gone to Bethlehem. Having seen the child themselves, they had evidence that would satisfy others. Accordingly they became the first teachers of the gospel, and went and claimed to others that the Messiah was come. One of the first duties of those who are newly converted to God, is a duty in which they delight, is to claim to others what they have seen felt. It should be done in a proper way, and at the proper time; but nothing should prevent a Christian recently converted from telling his feelings and views to others, to his friends, his parents, brothers, and old companions. And it may be remarked that often more good may be done then, than during any other period of their life. Entreaties, then, make an impression; nor can a sinner resist the appeals made to him by one who was just now with him in the way to ruin, but who now treads the way to heaven.

19. *Mary kept all these things.* All that happened, and all that was said respecting her child. She remembered that the angel had said to her; what had happened to Elisabeth and to the shepherds, all the extraordinary circumstances which had attended the birth of her son. There is a delicate and beautiful expression of the feelings of a mother. A mother forgets none of those things which occur respecting her children. Every thing they suffer or suffer, every thing that is said of them, is treasured up in her mind; and often, she thinks of those things, and anxiously seeks what they may indicate respecting the future character and

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xii. 3. <sup>2</sup> Ch. I. 31. Matt. I. 21. <sup>3</sup> Lev. xii. 2-4.

welfare of her child. ¶ *Pondered.* Weighed. This is the original meaning of the word weighed. She kept them; she revolved them; she weighed them in her mind, giving to each circumstance its just importance, and anxiously seeking what it might indicate respecting her child. ¶ *In her heart.* In her mind. She thought of these things often and anxiously.

20. *The shepherds returned.* To their flocks. ¶ *Glorifying, &c.* Giving honour to God, and celebrating his praises.

21. *Eight days, &c.* This was the regular time for performing the rite of circumcision. Gen. xvii. 12. ¶ *Called Jesus.* See Note, Matt. i. 21.

22. *Days of her purification.* Among the Hebrews a mother was required to remain at home for about forty days after the birth of a male child, and eighty for a female; and during that time she was reckoned as impure, that is, she was not permitted to go to the temple, or to engage in religious services with the congregation. Lev. xii. 3, 4. ¶ *To Jerusalem.* The place where the temple was, and where the ordinances of religion were celebrated. ¶ *To present him to the Lord.* Every first-born male child, among the Jews, was regarded as holy to the Lord. Exod. xiii. 2. By their being holy unto the Lord was meant that unto them belonged the office of priests. It was theirs to be set apart to the service of God, to offer sacrifice, and to perform the duties of religion. It is probable that at first the duties of religion devolved on the father; and that, when he became infirm or died, the duty devolved on the eldest son. And it is still manifestly proper that where the father is infirm or has died, the duty of conducting family worship should be performed by the eldest

Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every <sup>1</sup> male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xlii. 12; xxii. 29. Num. viii. 17.

son. Afterwards God chose the tribe of Levi in the place of the eldest sons, to serve him in the sanctuary. Num. viii. 13—18. Yet still it was proper to present the child to God, and it was required that it should be done with an offering.

23. *As it is written, &c.* Exod. xlii. 2.

24. *And to offer a sacrifice, &c.* Those who were able on such an occasion were required to offer a lamb for a burnt-offering, and a pigeon or a turtle-dove for a sin-offering. If not able to bring a lamb, then they were permitted to bring two turtle-doves or two young pigeons. ¶ *Turtle-doves.* Doves distinguished for having a plaintive and tender voice. By Mary's offering these she showed her poverty. And our Saviour, by coming in a state of poverty, has shown that it is not dishonourable to be poor. No station is dishonourable where God places us. He knows what is best for us, and he often makes a state of poverty an occasion of the highest blessings. If with poverty he grants us, as is often the case, peace, contentment, and religion, it is worth far more than all the jewels of Golconda, or the gold of Mexico. If it be asked why, since Mary and the Saviour were pure from any moral defilement in his conception and birth, it was necessary to offer such a sacrifice; why was it necessary that Jesus should be circumcised, since he had no sin; it may be answered: 1. That it was proper for them to fulfil all righteousness, and to show obedience to the law. 2. It was necessary for the future usefulness of Christ. Unless he had been circumcised, he could not have been admitted to any synagogue, or to the temple. He would have had no access to the people, and could not have been regarded as the Messiah. Both he and Mary, therefore, yielded obedience to the

the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and <sup>2</sup> devout, waiting for the consolation <sup>3</sup> of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 38. Mark. xv. 43. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xl. 1.

laws of the land, and thus set us an example that we should walk in their steps. Compare Note on Matt. iii. 15.

25. *Whose name was Simeon.* Some have supposed that this Simeon was a son of the famous Hillel, a distinguished teacher in Jerusalem, and president of the sanhedrim. But nothing is certainly known of him but what is here related. He was an aged man, of distinguished piety and reputation, and was anxiously expecting the coming of the Messiah. Such an old age is peculiarly honourable. No spectacle is more sublime than an old man, of piety and high character, looking for the appearing of the Lord, and patiently waiting for the time to come when he may be blessed with the sight of his Redeemer. ¶ *Just.* Righteous before God and man; approved by God as a righteous man, and discharging faithfully his duty to man. ¶ *Devout.* This word means a religious man, or a pious man. The original expresses the idea of good reputation, well received, or of high standing among the people. ¶ *Waiting for the consolation of Israel.* That is, waiting for the Messiah, who is called the Consolation of Israel because he would give comfort to them by his appearing. This name was often applied to the Messiah before he actually appeared. It was common to swear, also, by the Consolation of Israel, that is, by the Messiah about to come. See Lightfoot on this place. ¶ *The Holy Ghost, &c.* He was a holy man, and was divinely inspired respecting the Messiah about to appear.

26. *Was revealed.* In what way this was done we are not informed. Sometimes a revelation was made by a dream, at others by a voice, and at others by silent suggestion. All we know of this is that it was by the Holy Ghost. ¶ *And*

m by the Holy Ghost, that he could not see<sup>1</sup> death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit to the temple: and when the incense was brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law.

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxxix. 48. Heb. xi. 5.

*death.* Should not die. To see death, and to taste of death, was a common way among the Hebrews of expressing death itself. Compare Psa. lxxxix. 48. ¶ *The Lord's Christ.* Rather the Lord's Anointed. The word *Christ* means anointed, and it would have been better to use that word here. To an aged man, who had been long waiting for the Messiah, how wonderful must have been this revelation, his solemn assurance that the Messiah was near. But this revelation is now given to every man, that he need not taste of death till, by the eye of faith, he may see the Christ of God. He is offered freely. He has come. He waits to manifest himself to the world. And he is not illing that any should die for ever. To us, also, it will be as great a privilege in our dying hours to have seen Christ by faith, as it was to Simeon. It will be the only thing that can support us then, the only thing that will enable us to depart in peace.

27. *By the Spirit.* By the direction of the Spirit. ¶ *Into the temple.* Into that part of the temple where the public worship was chiefly performed, into the court of the women. See Note on Matt. xxi. 2. ¶ *The custom of the law.* That is, to make an offering for purification, and to present him to God.

28. *Blessed God.* Thanked, or praised God.

29. *Now lettest.* Now thou dost let, or permit. This word is in the indicative mood, and signifies that God was permitting him to die in peace, by having relieved his anxieties, allayed his fears, fulfilled the promises, and having, by the appearing of the Messiah, removed every reason why he should live any longer, and every wish to live. ¶ *Depart.* Die.

29 Lord, now<sup>2</sup> lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,<sup>3</sup> according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen<sup>4</sup> thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the<sup>5</sup> Gen-

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xli. 50. <sup>3</sup> Isa. lvii. 2. Rev. xiv. 13. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 6. Isa. lli. 10. Acts iv. 12. <sup>5</sup> Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 6; lx. 3. Acts xlii. 47, 48.

¶ *According to thy word.* Thy promise made by revelation. God never disappoints. To many it might have appeared improbable when such a promise was made to an old man, that it should be fulfilled. But God fulfils all his word; keeps all his promises, and never disappoints those who trust in him.

30. *Thy salvation.* Him who is to procure salvation for his people; or, the Saviour.

31. *Before the face of all people.* Whom thou hast provided for all people, or whom thou dost design to reveal to all people.

32. *A light to lighten the Gentiles.* This is in accordance with the prophecies in the Old Testament. Psa. xcvi. 3. Isa. ix. 6, 7; xlix. Mal. iv. 2. The Gentiles are represented as sitting in darkness, i.e. in ignorance and sin. Christ is a light to them, as by him they will be made acquainted with the character of the true God, his law, and the plan of redemption. As the darkness rolls away as the sun arises, so ignorance and error flee away when Jesus gives light to the mind. Nations shall come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising. Isa. lx. 2, 3. ¶ *And the glory, &c.* The first offer of salvation was made to the Jews. Ch. xxiv. 47. John iv. 22. Jesus was born among the Jews; among them had been the prophecies respecting him, and his first ministry was among them. Hence he was their glory, their honour, their light. To us it is a subject of special gratitude that the Saviour was given for the Gentiles. For, 1. We are Gentiles, and if he had not come we should have been shut out from the blessings of redemption. 2. It is he only that now

tiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother,

"can make our dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are,  
While on his breast we lean our head  
And breathe our life out sweetly there."

Thus our departure may be like that of Simeon. Thus we may die in peace. Thus it will be a blessing to die. But, 3. In order to do this, our life must be like that of Simeon. We must wait for the Consolation of Israel. We must look for his coming. We must be holy, harmless, undefiled, loving the Saviour. Then death to us, like death to Simeon, will have no terror, we shall depart in peace, and in heaven see the salvation of God. 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12. 4. Children, as well as hoary-haired Simeon, may look for the coming of Christ. They too must die; and their death will be happy only as they depend on the Lord Jesus, and are prepared to meet him.

34. *Simeon blessed them.* Joseph and Mary. On them he sought the blessing of God. ¶ *Is set.* Is appointed, or constituted for that, or such will be the effect of his coming. ¶ *The fall.* The word *fall* here seems to denote misery, suffering, disappointment, or ruin. There is a plain reference here to the passage where it is said that he should be a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. Isa. viii. 14, 15. Many expected a temporal prince, and in this they were disappointed. They loved darkness rather than light, and rejected him, and fell unto destruction. Many that were proud, were brought low by his preaching. They fell from the vain and giddy height of their own self-righteousness, and were humbled before God, and then through him rose again to a better righteousness and to better hopes. The nation also rejected him, and put him to death, and, as a judgment, fell into the hands of the Romans. Thousands were led into captivity, and thousands perished. The nation rushed into ruin, the temple was destroyed, and the people were scattered into all the nations. See

Behold, this *child* is set for the fall<sup>1</sup> and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken<sup>2</sup> against:

35 (Yea, a sword<sup>3</sup> shall pierce

<sup>1</sup> Isa. viii. 14. Rom. ix. 32, 33. 1 Cor. i. 23. 24. 2 Cor. ii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. <sup>2</sup> Acts xxviii. 22. <sup>3</sup> John xix. 25.

Rom. ix. 32, 33. 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. 1 Pet. ii. 8. ¶ *And rising again.* The word *again* is not expressed in the Greek. It seems to suppose in our translation that the same persons would fall and rise again. But this is not its meaning. It denotes that many would be ruined by his coming; and many others be made happy, or be saved. Many of the poor and humble, that were willing to receive him, would obtain pardon of sin and peace, should rise from their sins and sorrow here, and finally ascend to eternal life. ¶ *And for a sign,* &c. The word *sign* here denotes a conspicuous or distinguished object; and the Lord Jesus was such an object of contempt and rejection by all the people. He was despised, and his religion has been the common mark or sign for all the wicked, the profligate, and the profane, to curse, and ridicule, and oppose. Compare Isa. viii. 18, and Acts xxviii. 22. Never was a prophecy more exactly fulfilled than this. Thousands have rejected the gospel and fallen into ruin; thousands, those who are ashamed of Jesus, are still falling; those who blaspheme him, who deny him, who speak all manner of evil against him, and who would crucify him again if he were in their hands. But thousands also by him are renewed, justified, and raised up to life and peace.

35. *Yea, a sword,* &c. The sufferings and death of thy Son shall deeply afflict thy soul. And if Mary had not been thus forewarned and sustained by strong faith, she could not have borne the trials which came upon her Son. But God prepared her for it, and the holy mother was sustained. ¶ *That the thoughts,* &c. This is connected with the preceding verse. He shall be a sign, a conspicuous object to be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts may be made manifest. That is, that they might show how much they hated holiness. Nothing so brings out the feelings of sinners as to tell them of Jesus Christ. Many treat

through thy own soul also,) that <sup>1</sup> the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers <sup>2</sup> night and day.

<sup>1</sup> Judg. v. 15, 16. 1 Cor. xi. 19. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxi. 2. Acts xxvi. 7. 1 Tim. v. 5. Rev. vii. 16.

him with silent contempt; many are ready to gnash their teeth, many curse him; all show how much by nature the heart is opposed to religion, and thus are really, in spite of themselves, fulfilling the scriptures and the prophecies. So true it is "that none can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. xii. 3.

36. *Of the tribe of Aser.* The tribe of Aser, or Asher, dwelt in the northern part of the land of Canaan. Why she was called a prophetess is not known. It might be because she had been the wife of a prophet, or because she was employed in celebrating the praises of God, compare 1 Sam. x. 5; 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2, 3; or because she herself had foretold future events, being inspired.

37. *Fourscore and four years.* Eighty-four years old. ¶ *Fastings and prayers.* Constant religious service. Spending her time in prayer, and in all the ordinances of religion. ¶ *Night and day.* Continually, i. e., at the usual times of public worship, and in private. When it is said that she departed not from the temple, it is meant that she was constant and regular in all the public services at the temple, or was never absent from those services. We also should not neglect the public worship of God. God most approves those who love his service best, and blesses those who wait at his temple gates.

39. *They returned into Galilee.* Not immediately, but after a time. Luke has omitted the flight into Egypt recorded by

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that <sup>3</sup> looked for redemption in <sup>4</sup> Jerusalem.

39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled <sup>5</sup> with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 25. <sup>4</sup> Or, Israel. <sup>5</sup> Ver. 52. Isa. xl. 2, 3.

Matthew. But he has not denied it; nor are his words to be pressed as if he meant to affirm that they went immediately to Nazareth. A parallel case we have in the life of Paul. When he was converted, it is said that he came to Jerusalem, leaving us there to infer that he went directly. Acts ix. 26. Yet we learn in another place that this was after an interval of three years. Gal. i. 17, 18. In the case before us, there is no improbability in supposing that they returned to Bethlehem, then went to Egypt, and then to Galilee.

40. *Strong in spirit.* In mind, intellect, understanding. Jesus had a human soul, and that soul was subject to all the proper laws of a human spirit. It, therefore, increased in knowledge, strength, and character. Nor is it any more inconsistent with his being God, to say that his soul expanded, than to say that his body grew. ¶ *Filled with wisdom.* Eminent for wisdom when a child. That is, exhibiting an extraordinary understanding, and wise to flee from every thing sinful and evil. *And the grace of God, &c.* The word *grace* in the New Testament commonly means unmerited favour shown to sinners. Here it means no more than favour. God showed him favour, or was pleased with him and blessed him.

It is remarkable that this is all that is recorded of the infancy of Jesus. And this, with the short account that follows of his going to Jerusalem, is all that we know of him for thirty years of his life.



41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every <sup>1</sup> year at the feast of the passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxiii. 15. Deut. xvi. 1.

The design of the evangelist was to give an account of his public ministry, and not his private life. Hence they say little of him in regard to his first years. What they do say, however, corresponds entirely with what we might expect. He was wise, pure, pleasing God, and deeply skilled in the knowledge of the divine law. He set a lovely example for all children; was subject to his parents, and increased in favour with God and man.

42. *Twelve years old.* It is probable that this was the age at which males at first went up to Jerusalem. They were required to appear three times a year before God, to attend on the ordinances of religion in the temple, and they commenced at the age of twelve years. Exod. xxiii. 14—17. Deut. xvi. 16. ¶ *To Jerusalem.* Where the feasts of the Jews were all held. This was a journey from Nazareth of about seventy miles. ¶ *After the custom of the feast.* According to the usual manner of the feast. The way in which it was properly observed.

43. *Had fulfilled the days.* The days of the passover. Eight days in all, one day for killing the paschal lamb, and seven days for the observance of the feast of unleavened bread. Exod. xii. 15. Lev. xxiii. 5, 6.

44. *Supposing him to have been in the company.* It may seem very remarkable that parents should not have been more attentive to their only son, and have been assured of his presence with them when they left Jerusalem. But the difficulty may be explained by the following considerations. 1. In going to these great feasts, families and neighbours would join together, and form a large collection. 2.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the <sup>2</sup> company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of

<sup>2</sup> Psal. xlii. 4; cxlii. 1—4. Isa. li. 3.

It is not improbable that Jesus was with them when they were about to start from Jerusalem, and were making preparations. Seeing him then, they might have been secure as to his presence. 3. A part of the company might have left before the others, and Joseph and Mary may have supposed that he was with them, until they overtook them at night, and ascertained their mistake. ¶ *Kinsfolk.* Relatives. ¶ *Acquaintances.* Neighbours who had gone up with them in the same company to Jerusalem.

46. *After three days.* This means probably on the third day after they had left Jerusalem. That is, the first day they went towards Galilee; on the second they returned to Jerusalem; and on the third they found him. Compare Matt. xxvii. 63. Mark viii. 31. ¶ *In the temple.* In the court of the temple. For Jesus not being a Levitical priest could not enter into the temple itself. See Matt. xxi. 12. ¶ *In the midst of the doctors.* The teachers, the rabbins, who were the instructors of the people in matters of religion. ¶ *Asking them questions.* Proposing questions to them respecting the law and the prophets. There is no reason to suppose that this was for the purpose of perplexing or confounding them. The questions were doubtless proposed in a respectful manner, and the answers listened to with proper deference to the age and rank of the teachers. Jesus was a child; and religion does not teach a child to be rude or uncivil, even though he may really know much more than more aged persons. Religion teaches all, and especially the young, to treat others with respect, to show them the honour that is due, to venerate age,

doctors, both <sup>1</sup> hearing them, <sup>1</sup> asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding <sup>2</sup> and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed : and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us ? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How

is it that ye sought me ? wist ye not that I must be about <sup>3</sup> my Father's business ?

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them : <sup>4</sup> but his mother kept <sup>5</sup> all these sayings in her heart.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xlix. 1, 2. <sup>2</sup> Ch. iv. 22, 32. <sup>3</sup> Ps. cxix. att. xxiii. 3. Rom. xiii. 7. <sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. ii. <sup>5</sup> iii. 8, 9.

<sup>3</sup> John v. 17 ; ix. 4. <sup>4</sup> Eph. v. 21 ; vi. 1, 2. <sup>5</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 21. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 19. Dan. vii. 28.

ed to speak kindly to all. Exod. xx. 12. att. xxiii. 3. Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. <sup>5</sup> iii. 8, 9.

48. *Why hast thou thus dealt with us ?* Why hast thou given us all this trouble and anxiety, in going so far, and returning with so much solicitude ? ¶ *Thy father.* Joseph was not the real father of Jesus, but he was legally so ; and as the caretaker of his birth was not commonly known, he was called his father. Mary, in accordance with that usage, also called him so. ¶ *Sorrowing.* Anxious, lest in a multitude he might not be found ; or that some accident might have happened him.

49. *How is it, &c.* Why have ye sought me with so much anxiety ? Mary should have known that the Son of God was before her, that his heavenly Father would take care of him, and that he could do nothing amiss. ¶ *Wist ye not.* Know ye not. You had reason to know. You knew his design in coming into the world ; and that design was superior to the duty of obeying earthly parents, and they could be willing always to give me up the proper business for which I live.

*My Father's business.* Some think at this should be translated "in my father's house," that is, in the temple. Jesus reminded them here that he came down from heaven, that he had a higher father than an earthly parent, and that, even in early life, it was proper that he should be engaged in the work for which he came. He did not enter indeed upon a public work for eighteen years after this ; yet still, the work of God was his work, and always, even in childhood, it

was proper for him to be engaged in the great business for which he came.

50. *They understood not, &c.* It is remarkable that they did not understand Jesus in this ; but it shows how slow persons are to believe. Even his parents, after all that had taken place, did not seem to comprehend that he was to be the Saviour of men ; or if they did, they understood it in a very imperfect manner.

51. *Went down with them.* Down from Jerusalem, which was in a high, mountainous region. ¶ *Was subject unto them.* Performed the duty of a faithful and obedient child ; and not improbably was engaged in the trade of Joseph, that of a carpenter. Every Jew was required to learn some trade ; and there is every reason to think that our Saviour followed that of his reputed father. And from this we learn, 1. That obedience to parents is a duty. Jesus has set an example in this that all children should follow. Though he was the Son of God, and on proper occasions was engaged in the great work of redemption, yet he was also the Son of Mary ; and he loved and obeyed his mother, and was subject to her. 2. It is no dishonour to be a mechanic, or to be brought up in an obscure employment. Jesus has conferred honour on virtuous industry, and no man should be ashamed of industrious parents, though poor, or of a condition of life that is far from ease and affluence. Industry is honourable and virtuous poverty should not be regarded as a matter of reproach. The only thing to be ashamed of, in regard to this matter, is, when men are idle, or when children are

52 And Jesus increased <sup>1</sup> in wisdom and stature, <sup>2</sup> and in favour with God and man.

## CHAPTER III.

*John's preaching and baptism, 1—14.*

*His testimony to Jesus, 15—18. John imprisoned, 19, 20. Jesus baptised, 21, 22. His genealogy, 23—38.*

**N**OW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar. Pon-

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 40. <sup>1</sup> Sam. ii. 26. <sup>2</sup> Or, age.

too proud to hear or speak of the occupation of their parents, or to follow the same occupation.

52. *In favour with God.* That is, in proportion to his advance in wisdom. This does not imply that he ever lacked the favour of God, but that God regarded him with favour in proportion as he showed an understanding and spirit like his own. Happy are those children who imitate the example of Jesus, who are obedient to parents, who increase in wisdom, who are sober, temperate, and industrious, and who thus increase in favour with God and men.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *Now in the fifteenth year.* This was the thirteenth year of his being sole emperor. He was two years joint emperor with Augustus, and Luke reckons from the time when he was admitted to share the empire with Augustus Cæsar. See Lardner's Credibility, vol. 1. ¶ *Tiberius Cæsar.* Tiberius succeeded Augustus in the empire, and began his sole reign, Aug. 19, A.D. 14. He was a most infamous character, a scourge to the Roman people. He reigned twenty-three years, and was succeeded by Caligula, whom he appointed his successor on account of his notorious wickedness, and that he might be, as he expressed it, a serpent to the Romans. ¶ *Pontius Pilate.* Herod the Great left his kingdom to three sons. Note, Matt. ii. 22. To Archelaus he left Judea. He reigned nine years, when, on account of his crimes, he was banished into Vienne, and Judea was made a Roman province, and placed entirely under Roman governors, or procurators, and became completely tributary to Rome. Pontius Pilate was the fifth

tius Pilate being governor of Judæa and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 Annas <sup>3</sup> and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

<sup>3</sup> John xl. 49, 51; xviii. 13. Acts iv. 6.

governor that had been sent, and of course had been in Judæa but a short time. See the chronological table at the end of the volume. ¶ *Herod had been tetrarch of Galilee.* This was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, to whom Galilee had been left as his part of his father's kingdom. The word *tetrarch* properly denotes one who presides over a fourth part of a country or province; but it also came to be a general title, denoting one who reigned over any part, a third, a half, &c. In this case, Herod had given him a third of the dominions of his father but he was called tetrarch. It was this Herod who imprisoned John the Baptist, and to whom our Saviour, when arraigned, was sent by Pilate. ¶ *Ituræa was so called from Jetur, one of the sons of Ishmael.* Gen. xxv. 15. 1 Chron. i. 31. It was situated on the east side of the Jordan, and was taken from the descendants of Jetur by the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. 1 Chron. v. 19. ¶ *Regions of Trachonitis.* These regions were also on the east of the Jordan, and extended northward to the district of Damascus, and eastward to the deserts of Arabia, and were bounded on the west by Gaulonitis, and south by the city of Bostra. Philip had obtained these regions from the Romans on condition that he would extirpate the robbers. ¶ *Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene.* Abilene was so called from Abila, its chief city. It was situated in Syria, north-west of Damascus, and south-east of Lebanon, and was adjacent to Galilee.

2. *Annas and Caiaphas being high priests.* There was, properly speaking, but one high priest of the Jews. Yet the name of high priest continued to be given to those who had been in that office, and

3 And <sup>1</sup> he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance <sup>2</sup> for the remission of sins ;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias, the prophet, <sup>3</sup> saying. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be made smooth*;

6 And <sup>4</sup> all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O <sup>5</sup> generation of vipers, who

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iii. 1. Mark i. 4. <sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 77. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xl. 3. <sup>4</sup> Psa. xcvi. 2. Isa. xl. 5; xlix. 6; <sup>5</sup> Matt. iii. 7.

specially when they still possessed some civil office after they had left the high priesthood. In this case it appears that Caiaphas was high priest, and Annas had been, but had been dismissed from the office. It is highly probable that he still held an office under the Romans, and was perhaps, president of the sanhedrim. He is mentioned before Caiaphas, because he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, and probably was the eldest, and had been longest in office. Instances similar to this may be found in Josephus.

There is one remark to be made here about the manner in which the Gospels were written. They have every mark of plainness and honesty. An impostor does not mention names, and times, and places particularly. It would be easily seen that he was an impostor. But the sacred writers describe objects and men as if they were perfectly familiar with them. They never appear to be guarding themselves. They speak of things most minutely. And if they had been impostors, would have been easy to detect them. For example, John did not begin to preach in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, Philip was not tetrarch of Iturea, if Pontius Pilate was not governor of Judaea, how easy would it have been to detect them

hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come ?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits <sup>6</sup> worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then ?

11 He answereth and saith unto them, He <sup>7</sup> that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none;

<sup>6</sup> Or, meet for. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xiii. 7, 9. Matt. vii. 19. <sup>8</sup> Ch. xi. 41. <sup>9</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 14. <sup>10</sup> 1 John iii. 17.

in falsehood. Yet it was never done. Nay, we have evidence of that age in Josephus that these descriptions are strictly true, and consequently the Gospels must have been written by men who were personally acquainted with what they wrote, who were not impostors, and who were honest men. If they were honest, then the christian religion is true.

3—9. On the baptism of John, see Notes on Matt. iii.

10. *What shall we do, then?* John had told them to bring forth fruits appropriate to repentance, or to lead a life which showed that their repentance was genuine. They very properly, therefore, asked how it should be done, or what would be such a life.

11. *He that hath two coats, &c.* Or in other words, aid the poor according to your ability; be benevolent, and you will thus show that your repentance is genuine. It is remarkable that one of the first demands of religion is to do good, and it is in this way that it may be shown that the repentance is not feigned. For, 1. The nature of religion is to do good. 2. This requires self-denial, and none will deny themselves who are not attached to God. And, 3. This is to imitate Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for

and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. <sup>2</sup> no more than that which is appointed you.

12 Then came also publicans<sup>1</sup> to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13 And he said unto them, Exact

<sup>1</sup> Chap. vii. 29. Matt. xxi. 32.

our sakes became poor. ¶ *Coats.* See Note on Matt. v. 40. ¶ *Meat.* Provision of any kind.

12. *The publicans.* See note on Matt. v. 47. There is reason to think that the publicans or tax-gatherers were peculiarly oppressive and hard in their dealings with the people; and that as they had every opportunity of exacting more than they ought, so they often did it, and thus crushed themselves. The evidence of repentance in them would be to break off their sins, and to deal justly.

13. *Exact.* Demand, or take, no more. ¶ *Than that which is appointed.* That is, by the government. John does not condemn the office, or say that the employment should be forsaken. Though it was hated by the people, though it was often abused, and therefore unpopular, yet the office itself was not dishonourable. If there is a government, it must be supported; and of course there must be men whose duty it is to collect taxes, as the means of the proper support of the government. And as such a support of the government is necessary, so the people should pay cheerfully the just appointment of the rulers, and regard favourably those who are authorized to collect it. See Rom. xiii. 1—6.

14. *The soldiers likewise.* It seems that they also came to his baptism. Whether these were Jews or Romans cannot be ascertained. It is not improbable that, as Judea was a Roman province, they were Jews, or jewish proselytes, in the service of Herod Antipas, or Philip, and so were really in the Roman service. ¶ *Do violence, &c.* Do not take the property of any by unlawful force, or do not bear unjust force against the person or property of any individual. It is probable that they were many of them oppressive, or prone to violence, rapine, or theft, and burdensome even in times of peace to the inhabitants. ¶ *Neither accuse any falsely.* It is probable that

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xix. 8. Isa. i. 16, 17. Ezek. xviii. 21, 22, 27, 28. Mic. vi. 8. Matt. vii. 12. 1 Cor. vi. 10.

when they wished the property of others, and could not obtain it by violence, or when there was no pretext for violence, they often attempted the same thing in another way, and falsely accused the persons of crime. The word rendered *accuse falsely*, is the one from which our word sycophant is derived, and means, be not sycophants, or false accusers, for the sake of flattering or fawning on any one. The proper meaning of the word sycophant is fig-shower. There was a law in Athens which prohibited the importation of figs. The sycophant, literally the man who made figs to appear, or who showed them, was one who discovered to the magistrate persons who had violated this particular law; and then the word came to be used in a general sense to denote any complainer, a calumniator, an accuser, an informer. As such persons were usually cringing and fawning, and looked for a reward, the word came to be used to denote a fawner or flatterer. It is always used in a bad sense. It is correctly rendered here, *accuse falsely*. ¶ *Be content, &c.* Do not murmur or complain, or take unlawful means to increase your wages. ¶ *Wages.* This word means not only the money which was paid them, but also their rations or daily allowance of food. By this they were to show that their repentance was genuine, that it had a practical influence, that it produced a real reformation of life; and it is clear that no other repentance would be genuine. Every profession of repentance which is not attended with a change of life, is mere hypocrisy. It may further be remarked that John did not condemn their profession, or say that it was unlawful to be a soldier, or that they must abandon the business in order to be true penitents. It was possible to be a good man, and yet a publican or a soldier. What was required was, that in their professions they should show that they were really upright, and had abandoned crime. It is lawful to

them, <sup>1</sup> Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* <sup>2</sup> falsely; and be content <sup>3</sup> with your <sup>4</sup> wages.

15 And as the people were <sup>5</sup> in expectation, and all men <sup>6</sup> mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17 Whose fan <sup>7</sup> is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will <sup>8</sup> gather the wheat into his garner; but the <sup>9</sup> chaff he will burn <sup>10</sup> with fire unquenchable.

<sup>1</sup> Or, put no man in fear. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xxiii. 1. Lev. xix. 11. <sup>3</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 8. <sup>4</sup> Or, allowance. <sup>5</sup> Or, suspense. <sup>6</sup> Or, reasoned; or, debated. <sup>7</sup> Jer. xv. 7. <sup>8</sup> Mic. iv. 12. Matt. xiii. 30. <sup>9</sup> Psal. i. 4. <sup>10</sup> Psal. xxi. 9. Mark ix. 44, 48.

defend one's self, one's family, or one's country; hence it is lawful to be a soldier. Man everywhere, in all professions, should be a Christian; and then he will do honour to his profession, and his profession, if it is not a direct violation of the law of God, will be honourable.

15. *In expectation.* Expecting the Messiah. *Mused in their hearts.* Thought of his character, his preaching, and success, and anxiously inquired whether he did not do the things which were expected of the Messiah.

16—18. See Notes, Matt. iii. 11, 12.

19, 20. See Matt. xiv. 1—13. *Added this above all.* To all his former crimes he added this, not implying that this was the worst of his acts, but that this was one of his deeds, of like character with the others. The event here mentioned did not take place until some time after this, but it is mentioned here to show what was the end of John's preaching, or to fill out the account concerning him.

21, 22. See Matt. iii. 13—17. *Jesus being baptized.* Or, Jesus having been baptized. This took place after the baptism, and not during its administration. Matt. iii. 16. *Praying.* This circum-

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 But <sup>11</sup> Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it <sup>12</sup> came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be

<sup>11</sup> Matt. xiv. 3. Mark vi. 17. <sup>12</sup> Matt. iii. 13—17. John i. 32—34.

stance is omitted by the other evangelists; and it shows 1. That Jesus was in the habit of prayer. 2. That it is proper to offer up special prayer at the administration of the ordinances of religion. 3. That it is possible to pray in the midst of a great multitude, yet in secret. The prayer consisted, doubtless, in lifting up the heart silently to God. So we may do it any where, about our daily toil, in perplexity, in the midst of multitudes, in affliction, and thus may pray always.

22. *In a bodily shape.* This was a real visible appearance, and was doubtless seen by the people. The dove is an emblem of purity and harmlessness, and the form of the dove was assumed on this occasion to signify, probably, that the spirit with which Jesus would be endowed would be one of purity and innocence. The Holy Spirit, when he assumes a visible form, assumes that which will be emblematic of the thing to be represented. Thus he assumed the form of tongues, to signify the miraculous powers of language with which the apostles would be endowed; the appearance of fire, to denote their power, &c. Acts ii. 3.

23. *Jesus began to be, &c.* This was

*Genealogy of Jesus.*

LUKE.

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about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son<sup>1</sup> of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

24 Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph,

25 Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge,

26 Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda,

27 Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri,

28 Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er,

29 Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi,

30 Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim,

31 Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 55. John vi. 42.

the age on which the priests entered on their office. Num. iv. 3, 47. But it is not evident that Jesus had any reference to that in delaying his work to his thirtieth year. He was not subjected to the Levitical law in regard to the priesthood; and it does not appear that prophets and

was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan,<sup>2</sup> which was the son of David,

32 Which was the son of Jesse,<sup>3</sup> which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,

33 Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,

34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham,<sup>4</sup> which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,

35 Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala,

36 Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad,<sup>5</sup> which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech,<sup>6</sup>

37 Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,

38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Zech. xii. 12. <sup>3</sup> Sam. v. 14. <sup>4</sup> Ruth i. 18, 22. <sup>5</sup> Gen. xi. 24—26. <sup>6</sup> Gen. xi. 12. <sup>7</sup> Gen. v. 29. <sup>8</sup> Gen. i. 26; ii. 7. Isa. lxiv. 8. 1 Chr. xi. 45, 47.

teachers did not commence their work before that age. ¶ *As was supposed.* As was commonly thought, or perhaps being legally reckoned as his son.

24—38. See, on this genealogy, Matt. i. 1—16.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Christ's temptation, 1—13. He preaches at Nazareth, 14—27. His danger at Nazareth, 28—30. A demoniac healed at Capernaum, 31—37. Simon's wife's mother healed, and other miracles, 38—44.*

AND <sup>1</sup> Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

<sup>2</sup> Being forty days tempted of the devil. And <sup>2</sup> in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

<sup>3</sup> And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

<sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered him, saying, It <sup>5</sup> is written. That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

<sup>5</sup> And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

<sup>6</sup> And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and all this glory of them: for <sup>6</sup> that is de-

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 14. Matt. iv. 1—11. Mark. i. 12, 13. Exod. xxxiv. 28. 1 Kin. xix. 8. <sup>2</sup> Deut. ii. 3. <sup>3</sup> John xii. 31; xiv. 30. Eph. ii. 2. v. xiii. 2, 7.

## CHAPTER IV.

1—14. On the temptation of Jesus, see *Notes*, Matt. iv. 1—11.

<sup>2</sup> *Being forty days tempted.* That is, rough forty days he was tried in various ways by the devil. The temptations, however, which are recorded by Matthew and Luke did not take place till the forty days were finished. See *Att.* iv. 2, 3. ¶ *He did eat nothing.* He was sustained by the power of God during this season of extraordinary fasting.

<sup>13</sup> *Departed for a season.* For a time. From this it appears that our Saviour was afterwards subjected to temptations by

livered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

<sup>7</sup> If thou therefore wilt <sup>7</sup> worship me, all shall be thine.

<sup>8</sup> And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for <sup>8</sup> it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

<sup>9</sup> And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

<sup>10</sup> For it is written, He <sup>7</sup> shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee:

<sup>11</sup> And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

<sup>12</sup> And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou <sup>8</sup> shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

<sup>13</sup> And when the devil had ended all the <sup>9</sup> temptation, he departed from him for a season.

<sup>14</sup> ¶ And Jesus <sup>10</sup> returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

<sup>5</sup> Or, *fall down before me.* <sup>6</sup> Deut. vi. 13; x. 20. <sup>7</sup> Psal. xci. 11. <sup>8</sup> Deut. vi. 16. <sup>9</sup> Heb. ii. 17, 18; iv. 15. <sup>10</sup> John iv. 43. Acts x. 37.

Satan. But no particular temptations are recorded after this. From John xiv. 30, it seems that the devil tried him about the time of his agony in Gethsemane, but in what particular way we are not told. It is more than probable also, that Satan did much to excite the Pharisees and Sadducees to endeavour to entangle him, and the priests and rulers to oppose him. Yet, out of all his temptations, God delivered him; and so he will make a way to escape for all that are tempted, and will not suffer them to be tempted above that which they are able to bear. 1 Cor. x. 13.

<sup>14</sup> *In the power of the Spirit.* By the



15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 ¶ And he came to Nazareth,<sup>1</sup> where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he<sup>2</sup> went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered

<sup>1</sup> Matt. II. 23. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiii. 54. John xviii. 20. Acts xiii. 14; xvii. 2.

influence or direction of the Spirit. ¶ *A fame.* A report. See Matt. iv. 24.

15. *Glorified of all.* Praised by all; or, all were pleased with his instructions and admired his wisdom.

16. *And, as his custom was, he went, &c.* From this it appears that the Saviour regularly attended the service of the synagogue. In that service the scriptures of the Old Testament were read, prayers were offered, and the word of God was explained. See Note, Matt. iv. 23. There was great corruption in doctrine and practice at that time, but Christ did not, on that account, keep away from the place of public worship. From this we may learn: 1. That it is our duty regularly to attend public worship. 2. That it is better to attend a place which is not entirely pure, or where just such doctrines are not delivered as we would wish, than not attend at all. It is of vast importance that the public worship of God should be maintained; and it is our duty to assist in maintaining it, to show by our example that we love it, and to win others also to love it. See Heb. x. 25. At the same time, this remark should not be construed as enjoining it as our duty to attend a place where the true God is not worshipped, or where he is worshipped by pagan rites and pagan prayers. If, therefore, the Unitarian does not worship the true God, and if the Roman Catholic worships God in a manner forbidden, and offers homage to the creatures of God also, thus being guilty of idolatry, it cannot be the duty of a man to attend on such a place of worship. ¶ *The synagogue.* See Matt. iv. 23. ¶ *Stood up for to read.* The books of Moses were so divided that they could be read through in the synagogues once in a year. To these were added portions out of the prophets, so that no small part of them was read

unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written.

18 The<sup>3</sup> Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-

<sup>3</sup> Isa. lxi. 1.

also once a year. It is not known whether our Saviour read the lesson which was the regular one for that day, though it may seem probable he would not depart from the usual custom. Yet, as the eyes of all were fixed on him, as he deliberately looked out a place; and as the people were evidently surprised at what he did, it seems to be intimated that he selected a lesson which was not the regular one for that day.

17. *There was delivered unto him.* By the minister of the synagogue, or the keeper of the sacred books. They were kept in an ark or chest, not far from the pulpit, and the minister gave them to whomsoever he chose, to read them publicly. ¶ *The book.* The volume containing the prophecy of Isaiah. It would seem, from this, that the books were kept separate, and not united into one as with us. ¶ *When he had opened the book.* Literally, when he had unrolled the book. Books, among the ancients, were written on parchments, or vellum, i. e., skins of beasts, and were rolled together on two rollers, beginning at each end; so that while reading they rolled off from one to the other. Different forms of books were indeed used, but this was the most common. When used, the reader unrolled the MS. as far as the place which he wished to find, and kept before him just so much as he would read. When the roller was done with, it was carefully deposited in a case. There were other forms of the scroll; there were also collections of sheets in the shape of a modern book, secured with rings and rods. ¶ *The place where it is written.* Isa. lxi. 1.

18, 19. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.* Or, I speak by divine appointment. I am divinely inspired to speak. There can be no doubt that the passage in Isaiah had a principal reference to the

of the gospel: deliverance to captives; and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,\*

Isa. xlii. 2. Matt. xii. 20.

Our Saviour directly applies it himself, and it is not easily applicable to any other prophet. Its first application might have been to the restoration of Jews from Babylon; but the language of the prophecy is often applicable to two other events, and the secondary event is the more important. In this case the prophet uses most striking poetic images to depict the return from Babylon, but the same images also describe the appropriate work of the Son of God.

*Anointed me.* Anciently kings and prophets, and the high priest, were anointed to their work by anointing with oil. Exod. xxix. 7. 1 Sam. ix. 16; x. 1. 1 Kin. xix. 16, 18. This oil or ointment was made of various substances, and was forbidden to imitate it. Exod. x. 24—28. Hence those who were set apart to the work of God as king, or prophet, or priest, were called the Lord's anointed. 1 Sam. xvi. 6. Psa. lxxxiv. 9.

xiv. 1. Hence the Son of God is called the Messiah, a Hebrew word, signifying the Anointed; or the Christ, a Greek word signifying the same thing.

by his being anointed is not meant that he was literally anointed, for he was not set apart in that manner; but that he was set apart for this work, that he was constituted or appointed him to prophet, priest, and king of his people.

*To preach the gospel to the poor.* The gospel means good news, the news of salvation. By the poor are

those who are destitute of the comforts of this life, and who, therefore, were readily disposed to seek for help in heaven; all those who are afflicted by their sins, or are poor in spirit;

and all the miserable and the afflicted. Isa. lvi. 7. Our Saviour gave witness that he was the Messiah,

God, that he preached to the poor. The Pharisees and Sadducees despised the poor. Anciently they neglected them. But the time was felt to be needed, and the poor were to be received with gratitude.

mind with pride, with self-complacency, and with a feeling that the gospel is not needed. The poor feel their need of some sources of comfort that the world cannot give, and accordingly our Saviour met with his greatest success among the poor; and there also, since, the gospel has shed its richest blessings and its surest joys. This is one proof that the gospel is true. If it had been of men, it would have sought the rich and mighty. But it pours contempt on all human greatness, and seeks, like God, to do good to those whom the world overlooks or despises.

*To heal the broken-hearted.* To console those who are deeply afflicted, or whose hearts are broken by external calamities, or by a deep sense of their sinfulness.

*To deliverance to the captives.* This is a figure originally applicable to those in captivity in Babylon. They were miserable. To grant deliverance to them, and restore them to their country; to grant deliverance to those who are in prison, and restore them to their family; to give liberty to the slave, and restore him to freedom, were to confer the highest benefit, and impart the richest favour. So the gospel imparts favour. It does not literally open the doors of prisons, but it releases the mind, captive under sin; it gives comfort to the prisoner, and it will finally open all prison doors, and break off all the chains of slavery, and by preventing crime, prevent also the sufferings that are the consequence of crime.

*To set at liberty them that are bruised.* This was often literally fulfilled. Matt. ix. 30; xi. 5. John ix. 11, &c. The word bruised, here, evidently has the same general signification as broken-hearted or the contrite. It means those who are pressed down by great calamity, or whose hearts are pressed or bruised by affliction or sin. To set them at liberty is the same as to free them from this pressure, or to give them consolation.

*The acceptable year of the Lord.* The time when God is willing to accept of men, or to receive sinners coming to him. The gospel assures us that the guilty may return, and that God will graciously receive them. There is,

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19 To preach the acceptable year<sup>1</sup> of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and<sup>2</sup> sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened<sup>3</sup> on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 41, 42. Lev. xxv. 8—13, 50—54. Isa. lxi. 2; lxiii. 4. <sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 2. <sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 1, 2. Acts xiii. 14—16; xvi. 13. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xix. 48. Acts iii. 12.

perhaps, here, an allusion to the year of Jubilee, the fiftieth year, when the trumpet was blown, and through the whole land proclamation was made of the liberty of Hebrew slaves, of the remission of debts, and of the restoration of possessions to their original families. Lev. xxv. 8—13. ¶ *The acceptable year.* The grateful, or pleasant, or agreeable time, appointed by God.

20. *Were fastened on him.* Were intently fixed on him, waiting to see what explanation he would give of the words.

21. *This scripture.* This writing, or this part of the scriptures. ¶ *Fulfilled.* It is coming to pass; the thing originally intended by it is about to be accomplished. ¶ *In your ears.* In your hearing, or, you hear, in my preaching, the fulfilment of this prophecy. It is probable that he said much more than is here recorded, but Luke has presented only the substance of his discourse. This was the amount or sum of his sermon, or his explanation of the passage, that it was now receiving its accomplishment.

22. *All bare him witness.* All were witnesses of the power and truth of what he said. Their reason and conscience approved of it, and they were constrained to admit the force and propriety of it, and on this account they wondered. ¶ *They wondered.* They were struck with the truth and force of his words, and especially when they remembered that he was a native of their own place, and that they had been long acquainted with him, and that he should now claim to be the Messiah, and give so much evidence that he was the Christ. ¶ *The gracious words.*

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious<sup>4</sup> words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is<sup>5</sup> not this Joseph's son?

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum,<sup>6</sup> do also here in thy country.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. ii. 47. Psa. xlv. 2. Isa. l. 4. Matt. xiii. 54. Mark vi. 2. <sup>5</sup> John vi. 42. <sup>6</sup> Matt. iv. 13; xi. 23.

The words of grace or favour; the kind, affectionate, and tender exposition of the words, and explanation of the design of his coming, and the nature of the plan of redemption. It was so different from the harsh and unfeeling mode of the Pharisees; so different from all the expectations respecting the Messiah, who, they expected, would be a prince and a bloody conqueror, that they were filled with astonishment and awe.

23. *Physician, heal thyself.* This proverb was probably in common use at that time. Suppose a man should attempt to heal another when he was himself diseased in the same manner. It would be natural to ask him first to cure himself, and thus to render it manifest that he was worthy of confidence. The connexion of this proverb, here, is this: You profess to be the Messiah. You have wrought miracles at Capernaum. You profess to be able to deliver us from our maladies, our sins, our afflictions, &c. Show that you have the power, that you are worthy of our confidence, by working miracles here, as you profess to have done at Capernaum. It does not refer, therefore, to any healing of himself, or imply any reflection on him for setting up to teach them. It was only a demand that he would show the proper evidence by miracles why they should trust in him, and he proceeds to show them why he would not give them this evidence. ¶ *Whatsoever we have heard done.* Whatsoever we have heard that thou hast done. It would seem from this that Christ had before this wrought miracles in Capernaum, though the evangelist has

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No <sup>1</sup> prophet is accepted in his own country.

25 But I tell you of a truth, many <sup>2</sup> widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up <sup>3</sup> three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 57. John iv. 44. <sup>2</sup> 1 Kin. xvii. <sup>3</sup> Jas. v. 17.

it recorded them. ¶ *In Capernaum.* Capernaum was on the north-west corner of the sea of Tiberias, and was not far from Nazareth. It is not improbable that some of those who then heard him might have been present, and witnessed some of his miracles at Capernaum. See note on Matt. iv. 13.

24. *No prophet is accepted.* Has honour, or is acknowledged as a prophet. See Note, Matt. xiii. 57.

25. *Of a truth.* Truly, and, therefore, worthy of your credit. He calls attention to two cases where acknowledged prophets had so little honour in their own nation that they bestowed their favours on foreigners. So, says he, such is the want of faith in my own country, that I shall work no miracles here, but shall give the evidence of my divine mission to others. ¶ *In Israel.* In the land of Israel or Judea. It was, therefore, the more remarkable, since there were so many in his own country whom he might have helped, that he should have gone to a heathen city, and aided a poor widow there. ¶ *The days of Elias.* The days of Elijah. See the account of this in 1 Kin. xvii. 8—24. ¶ *Three years and six months.* From 1 Kin. xviii. 1, 45, it would seem that the rain fell in the third year. That is, at the end of the third year after the rain had ceased to fall at the usual time. There were two seasons of the year when rains fell in Judea, in October and April, called the early and latter rain. Consequently, there was an interval between them of six months. To the three years, therefore, when ruin was withheld at the usual times, are to be added the previous six months, when no rain fell as a matter of

Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And <sup>4</sup> many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. <sup>5</sup>

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

<sup>4</sup> 2 Kin. v. 14. <sup>5</sup> Job xxxiii. 13; xxxvi. 23 Dan. iv. 35.

course, and consequently three years and six months elapsed without rain. ¶ *A great famine.* A great want of food from long-continued and distressing drought.

26. *Save unto Sarepta.* Sarepta was a town between Tyre and Sidon, near the Mediterranean sea. It was not a Jewish city, but a Sidonian, and, therefore, a gentile town. The word *save*, in this verse, does not express the meaning of the original. It would seem to imply that the city was Jewish. The meaning of the verse is this. He was sent to none of the widows in Israel. He was not sent except to Sarepta, to a woman that was a Sidonian.

27. *Many lepers.* For an account of the leprosy, see Note on Matt. viii. 2. ¶ *Time of Eliseus.* Time of Elisha. The word *Eliseus* is the Greek way of writing the word Elisha, as Elias is of Elijah. ¶ *Saving Naaman the Syrian.* The account of his cure is contained in 2 Kin. v.

28. *Filled with wrath.* They were enraged, probably for the following reasons: 1. They saw that the cases applied to themselves, and that they would not receive the miraculous evidences of his mission. 2. That he would direct his attention to others, and not to them. 3. That the Gentiles were objects of compassion with God, and that God often showed more favour to a single Gentile than to multitudes of Jews in the same circumstances. 4. That they might be worse than the Gentiles. And, 5. That it was a part of his design to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and not confine his labours to them only. On these accounts their favour was soon turned to wrath, and the whole transaction shows us: 1. That popular applause is of little value. 2. That the

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow<sup>1</sup> of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down<sup>2</sup> headlong.

30 But he passing<sup>3</sup> through the midst of them went his way,

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with<sup>4</sup> power.

33 ¶ And<sup>5</sup> in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

34 Saying, <sup>6</sup> Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I<sup>8</sup> know thee who thou art: the<sup>9</sup> Holy One of God.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed,

<sup>1</sup> Or, edge. <sup>2</sup> Psal. xxxvii. 14, 32, 33. <sup>3</sup> John viii. 59; x. 39. <sup>4</sup> Jer. xxiii. 29. <sup>5</sup> Matt. vii. 28, 29. <sup>6</sup> Tit. ii. 15. <sup>7</sup> Heb. iv. 12. <sup>8</sup> Mark. i. 23. <sup>9</sup> Or, array. <sup>10</sup> Jas. ii. 19. <sup>11</sup> Ver. 41. <sup>12</sup> Ch. i. 35. <sup>13</sup> Psal. xvi. 10. <sup>14</sup> Dan. ix. 24. <sup>15</sup> Acta. iii. 14.

slightest circumstances may soon turn the warmest professed friendship to hatred. And, 3. That men are exceedingly unreasonable in being unwilling to hear the truth, and profit by it.

29. *The brow of the hill whereon*, &c. The region in which Nazareth was is hilly, though Nazareth was situated between two hills, or in a vale among mountains. The place to which they led the Saviour is still shown, and is called the Mount of Precipitation. It is at a short distance to the south of Nazareth. See Note on Matt. ii. 23. ¶ *Cast him down*. This was the effect of a popular tumult. They had no legal right to take life on any occasion, and least of all in

and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and<sup>10</sup> they come out.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 ¶ And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And<sup>11</sup> Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40 ¶ Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not<sup>12</sup> to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

42 And when it was day, he de-

<sup>10</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 22. <sup>11</sup> Matt. viii. 14, 15. <sup>12</sup> Matt. i. 29—31. <sup>13</sup> Or, to say that they knew him to be Christ.

this furious and irregular manner. The whole transaction shows: 1. That the character given of the Galileans elsewhere as being peculiarly wicked, was a just one. 2. That the wickedness of the heart will lead men to extremities when it is acted out. And, 3. That men are opposed to the truth, that they hate the Lord Jesus, and that they would do any thing if not restrained, to manifest their opposition.

30. *Passing through the midst of them, went his way*. This escape was very remarkable. It is remarkable that he should escape out of their hands when the very object was to destroy him, that he should escape in so peaceful a manner, without

parted and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore <sup>1</sup> am I sent.

44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

### CHAPTER V.

*Christ teaching from the lake of Galilee, 1—3. The miraculous draught of fish, 4—11. The leper healed, 12—15. Christ's retired prayer, 16, and miracles, 17. The paralytic forgiven and*

<sup>1</sup> Mark i. 14; 38, 39.

violence or conflict. A similar case is recorded in John viii. 59. There are but two ways of accounting for this: 1. That other Nazarenes, who had not been present in the synagogue, heard what was doing, and came to rescue him, and in the contest that rose between the two parties, Jesus silently escaped. 2. More probably, Jesus, by divine power, by the force of a word, or look, stilled their passions, arrested their purposes, and passed silently through them. That he had such a power over the spirits of men, we learn from the occurrence in Gethsemane, when he said, "I am he, and they went backward, and fell to the ground." John xviii. 6.

31—44. See this explained in the Notes on Mark i. 21—39.

### CHAPTER V.

1. *The people pressed upon him.* Multitudes came to hear. There was a glorious prospect of a revival of religion. There were times in the life of our Saviour when thousands were anxious to hear him, and when many, as we have no reason to doubt, became his true followers. Indeed it is not possible to tell what might have been his success, had not the proud Pharisees and scribes, and those who were in office opposed him, and taken measures to draw the people away from his ministry, for the common people heard

him gladly. *healed, 18—26. Matthew called, 27—29. Christ's answer to murmuring Scribes and Pharisees, 30—39.*

AND <sup>2</sup> it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iv. 18—20. Mark i. 16—18. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xiii. 1, 2. Mark iv. 1, 2.

him gladly. ¶ *The lake of Gennesaret.* Called also the sea of Galilee, and the sea of Tiberias. This was the region of the early toils of our Redeemer. Here he performed some of his first and most amazing miracles, here he selected his disciples, and here, on the shores of this little and retired lake, among people of poverty, and inured to the privations of fishermen, he laid the foundation of a religion which is yet to spread through all the world, and which has already blessed millions of guilty and miserable men, and translated them to heaven.

2. *Two ships.* The ships used on so small a lake were probably no more than fishing boats, probably without decks, and easily drawn up on the beach. Josephus says there were two hundred and thirty of them on the lake, attended by four or five men each. This is also clear from the account commonly given of them. A single large draught of fishes endangered them, and came near sinking them. ¶ *Standing by the lake.* Anchored by the lake, or drawn up upon the beach.

3. *Which was Simon's.* Simon Peter's. ¶ *Prayed him.* Asked him. ¶ *He sat down.* This was the common posture of Jewish teachers. They seldom or never spoke to the people standing. Compare Matt. v. 1. It may be somewhat difficult to conceive why Jesus should go into a boat, and put off from the shore in order

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch<sup>1</sup> out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing:<sup>2</sup> nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And<sup>3</sup> when they had this done,

<sup>1</sup> John xxi. 6.    <sup>2</sup> Psa cxxvii. 1, 2. Ezek. xxxvii. 11, 12.    <sup>3</sup> Eccl. xi. 6. Gal. vi. 9.

to speak to the multitude. But it is probable that this was a small bay or cove, and that when he was in the boat, the people on the shore stood round him in the form of an amphitheatre. It is not improbable that the lake was still, that scarcely a breeze passed over it, that all was silence on the shore, and that there was nothing to disturb his voice. In such a situation he could be heard by multitudes, and no spectacle could be more beautiful than the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world, thus speaking from the bosom of a placid lake, the emblem of the peaceful influence of his own doctrines, to the poor, the ignorant, and the attentive multitudes assembled on the shore. Oh! how much more effect may we suppose the gospel would have in such circumstances, than when proclaimed among the proud, the gay, the honoured, even when assembled in the most splendid edifice that wealth and art could finish!

4. *Launch out.* Go out with your vessels. ¶ *Into the deep.* Into the sea: at a distance from the shore. It is not improbable that this appeared strange to Peter, and served to render the miracle more striking. Nets were commonly drawn near the shore, in somewhat shallow water. An order to go, therefore, into the deep, was contrary to the usual rules of fishing. ¶ *For a draught.* A draught of fish; or let down your nets for the taking of fish.

5. *Master.* This is the first time that the word translated here Master, is used in the New Testament; and it is used only by Luke. The other evangelists use the word Rabbi, or Lord. The word here means a prefect, or one placed over others; and hence it comes to mean

they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help<sup>4</sup> them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down<sup>5</sup> at Jesus' knees, saying,

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxiii. 5. Prov. xviii. 24. Gal. vi. 2.    <sup>5</sup> Judg. xiii. 22. 2 Sam. vi. 9. 1 Kin. xvii. 13. Isa. vi. 5.

teacher, or guide. ¶ *At thy word.* At thy command. Though it seemed so improbable that they should take anything after having in vain toiled all night, and still more improbable by launching into the deep, yet he was willing to trust the word of Jesus, and make the trial. This was a remarkable instance of faith. Peter, as it appears, knew little then of Jesus. He was not then a chosen apostle. Jesus came to them almost a stranger, and unknown; and yet at his command Peter resolved to make another trial, and go once more out into the deep. O if all would as readily obey Jesus, all would be in like manner blessed. If sinners would thus obey him, they would find all his promises sure. He never disappoints. He asks only that we have confidence in him, and he will give to us every needful blessing.

6. *Their net brake.* Or their net began to break; or was about to break. This is all that is implied in the Greek word. If their nets had actually broken, as our English word seems to suppose, the fish would have escaped. But no more is meant, than that there was such a multitude of fishes that their net was on the point of being rent asunder.

7. *They beckoned.* They gave signs; perhaps they were at a considerable distance, so that they could not be easily heard. ¶ *Their partners.* James and John. See ver. 10.

8. *When Simon Peter saw it.* Saw the great amount of fishes; the remarkable success of letting down the net. ¶ *He fell down at Jesus' knees.* This was a common posture of supplication. He had no doubt now of the power and knowledge of Jesus. In amazement, and wonder,

Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes<sup>1</sup> which they had taken:

10 And so ~~was~~ also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook<sup>2</sup> all, and followed him.

12 ¶ And<sup>3</sup> it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. viii. 8. <sup>2</sup> Matt. iv. 20; xix. 27. Phil. iii. 7, 8. <sup>3</sup> Matt. viii. 2, 3. Mark i. 40—42.

and gratitude, and not doubting that he was in the presence of some divine being, he prostrated himself to the earth, trembling and afraid. So should sinful men always throw themselves at the feet of Jesus at the proofs of his power; so should they humble themselves before him at the manifestations of his goodness. ¶ *Depart from me.* This is an expression of Peter's humility, and his consciousness of his unworthiness. It was not from want of love to Jesus; it did not show that he would not be pleased with his favour and presence; but it was the result of being convinced that Jesus was a messenger from God, a high and holy being; and he felt that he was unworthy to be in his presence. In his deep consciousness of sin, therefore, he requested that Jesus would depart from him and his little vessel. Peter's feeling was not unnatural; though it was not proper to request Jesus to leave him. It was an involuntary, sudden request, and arose from ignorance of the character of Jesus. We are not worthy to be with him, to be reckoned among his friends, or to dwell in heaven with him. But he came to seek the lost, and to save the impure. He graciously condescends to dwell with those who are humble and contrite, though

13 And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be<sup>4</sup> thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded,<sup>5</sup> for a testimony unto them.

15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and<sup>6</sup> great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

16 ¶ And<sup>7</sup> he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that<sup>8</sup> there were Pharisees and doctors

<sup>4</sup> 2 Kin. v. 10, 14. <sup>5</sup> Lev. xiv. 4—7. <sup>6</sup> Matt. iv. 25. Mark iii. 7. John vi. 2. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xiv. 23. Mark vi. 46. <sup>8</sup> John iii. 21.

they are conscious that they are not worthy of his presence. And we may, therefore, come boldly to him, and ask him to receive us to his home, to an eternal dwelling with him in the heavens.

10. *Fear not.* He calmed their fears. With mildness and tenderness, he stilled all their troubled feelings, and to their surprise announced that henceforward they should be appointed as heralds of salvation. ¶ *From henceforth.* Hereafter. ¶ *Shall catch men.* Shall be ministers of the gospel; and your business shall be to win men to the truth, that they may be saved.

11. *Forsook all.* It was not much that they left, a couple of small boats and their nets; but it was all they had, even all their living. It showed their love of Jesus, and their willingness to deny themselves, as really as if they had forsaken palaces and gold. All that Jesus asks is that we should leave all we have for him; that we should love him more than we do whatever friends or property we may possess, and be willing to give them all up when he requires them.

12—16. See Matt. viii. 2—4.

17—26. See this passage explained in Matt. ix. 1—7.

17. *On a certain day.* The time and



of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

18 ¶ And, <sup>1</sup> behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.

19 And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive <sup>2</sup> sins, but God alone?

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 2-7. Mark ii. 3-12. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxxii. 5; ciii. 3; cxxx. 4. Isa. i. 18; xlii. 25.

place are not particularly mentioned, but from Matt. ix. 1, it seems it was at Capernaum.

19. *The tiling.* See Matt. ix. 1-7.

27-32. See Matt. ix. 9-13.

29. *Made him a great feast.* This circumstance Matthew, or Levi, as he is here called, has omitted. It shows how little inclined the evangelists are to say any thing in favour of themselves, or to praise themselves. True religion does not seek to commend itself, or to speak of what it does, even when it is done for the Son of God. It seeks retirement; delights rather in the consciousness of doing well, than in its being known; and leaves its good deeds to be spoken of, if spoken of at all, by others. This is agreeable to the direction

23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and <sup>3</sup> take up thy couch, and go unto thine house.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

26 And they were all amazed, and <sup>4</sup> they glorified God, and <sup>5</sup> were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

27 ¶ And <sup>6</sup> after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and <sup>7</sup> there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

<sup>3</sup> John v. 8, 12. <sup>4</sup> Acts iv. 21. Gal. i. 24. <sup>5</sup> Ver. 8. <sup>6</sup> Matt. ix. 9. Mark ii. 13. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xv. 1, 2.

of Solomon, Prov. xxvii. 2, "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth." This feast was made expressly for our Lord, and attended by many publicans, probably men of wicked character; and it is not improbable that Matthew got them together for the purpose of bringing them into contact with our Lord, to do them good. Our Saviour did not refuse to go, and to go, too, at the risk of being accused as a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. Matt. xi. 19. But his motives were pure. In the thing itself, there was no harm. It afforded an opportunity of doing good, and we have no reason to doubt that it was improved by the Lord Jesus. Happy would it be if

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; <sup>1</sup> but they that are sick.

32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners <sup>2</sup> to repentance.

33 ¶ And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but <sup>3</sup> thine eat and drink?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast <sup>4</sup> in those days.

36 ¶ And <sup>5</sup> he spake also a pa-

<sup>1</sup> Jer. viii. 22. <sup>2</sup> Luke xv. 7, 10. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. <sup>4</sup> 1 Tim. i. 15. <sup>5</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 9. <sup>6</sup> Ch. vii. 34, 35. <sup>7</sup> Isa. xxii. 12. <sup>8</sup> Matt. ix. 16, 17. Mark ii. 21, 22.

all the great feasts that are made, were made in honour of our Lord. Happy, if he would be a welcome guest there; and happy if ministers and pious people who attend them demeaned themselves as the Lord Jesus did, and they were made the means of advancing his kingdom. But, alas! there are few places where our Lord would be so unwelcome as at great feasts; and few places that serve so much to render the mind more gross, dissipated, and irreligious.

33—39. See this passage illustrated in Matt. ix. 14—17.

39. *Having drunk old wine, &c.* Wine increases its strength and flavour, and its mildness and mellowness, by age, and the old is therefore preferable. They who had tasted such mild and mellow wine would not readily drink the comparatively sour and astringent juice of the grape as it came from the press. The meaning of this proverb in this place seems to be this. You, Pharisees, wish to draw my disciples

able unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new agreeth not <sup>6</sup> with the old.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.

39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old <sup>7</sup> is better.

#### CHAPTER VI.

*Jesus in the corn-field, and defending his disciples, 1—5. Withered hand cured, 6—11. Christ's retired prayer, and choice of the twelve, 12—16. Miracles, 17—19. The beatitudes, 20—26. The disciples taught, 27—49.*

AND <sup>8</sup> it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first,

<sup>9</sup> Lev. xix. 19. <sup>10</sup> Deut. xxii. 11. <sup>11</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 16. <sup>12</sup> Jer. vi. 16. <sup>13</sup> Matt. xii. 1—9. Mark ii. 23—28.

to the austere and rigid duties of the ceremonial law, to fasting, and painful rites. But they have come under a milder system. They have tasted the gentle and tender blessings of the gospel. They have no relish for your stern and harsh requirements. To insist now on their observing them, would be like telling a man who had tasted of good, ripe, and mild wine, to partake of that which is sour and unpalatable. At the proper time all this will be regarded. But at present to teach them to fast when they see no occasion for it, when they are full of joy at the presence of their Master, would be like putting a piece of new cloth on an old garment, or new wine into old bottles; or drinking unpleasant wine, after one had tasted that which was pleasant. It would all be ill-timed, inappropriate, and incongruous.

#### CHAPTER VI.

1—11. See this passage explained in Notes on Matt. xii. 1—13.

that he went through the corn-fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which <sup>1</sup> is not lawful to do on the sabbath-days?

3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what <sup>2</sup> David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful <sup>3</sup> to eat, but for the priests alone?

5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

6 And <sup>4</sup> it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xx. 10. <sup>2</sup> Isa. lviii. 13. <sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. xxi. 6. <sup>4</sup> Lev. xxiv. 9. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiii. 14; xiv. 3. Matt. xii. 10—13. Mark iii. 1—4.

1. *Second sabbath after the first.* See Matt. xii. 1. This phrase has given great perplexity to commentators. A literal translation would be, *on the sabbath called second prime*, or second first sabbath. The word occurs nowhere else in any writing. It is, therefore, exceedingly difficult of interpretation. The most natural and easy interpretation is that proposed by Scaliger. The second day of the passover was a great festival, on which the wave-sheaf was offered. Lev. xxiii. 11. From that day they reckoned seven weeks, or seven sabbaths to the day of pentecost. The first sabbath after that second day was called the second prime, or the first from the second day of the feast. The second sabbath was called the second second, or the second sabbath from the second day of the feast; the third, the third second, &c. This day, therefore, on which the Saviour went through the fields, was the first sabbath that occurred after the second day of the feast. ¶ Rub-

into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; <sup>5</sup> that they might find an accusation against him.

8 But he knew their thoughts, <sup>6</sup> and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise <sup>7</sup> up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

9 Then Jesus said unto them, I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

10 And looking <sup>8</sup> round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

11 And they were filled with

<sup>5</sup> John ix. 16. <sup>6</sup> Job xlii. 2. <sup>7</sup> Isa. xlii. 4. Acts xxvi. 26. <sup>8</sup> Mark iii. 5.

*bing them in their hands.* The word *corn* here means wheat or barley. They rubbed it in their hands, to separate the grain from the chaff.

8. *But he knew their thoughts.* He knew their thoughts, their dark malicious designs, by the question which they proposed to him, whether it was lawful to heal on the sabbath days, Matthew. In reply to their question, Jesus asked them whether they would not release a sheep on the sabbath-day, if it was fallen into a pit; and also asked them, whether it was better to do good than to do evil on that day! implying that to omit to do good was, in fact, doing evil.

11. *Were filled with madness.* Probably: 1. Because he had shown his power to work a miracle. 2. Because he had shown his power to do it contrary to what they thought was right. 3. Because by doing it he had shown that he was from God, and that they were, therefore, wrong in their views of the sabbath. And, 4.

madness; and communed<sup>1</sup> one with another what they might do to Jesus.

12 And<sup>2</sup> it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain<sup>3</sup> to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 ¶ And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve,<sup>4</sup> whom also he named apostles;

14 Simon, (whom he also named

<sup>1</sup> Ps. li 1, 2. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xiv. 23. <sup>3</sup> Matt. vi. 6. <sup>4</sup> Matt. x. 1—4. Mark iii. 13; vi. 7.

Because he had shown no respect to their views of what the law of God demanded. Pride, obstinacy, malice, and disappointed self-confidence were all combined, therefore, in producing madness. Nor were they alone. Men are often enraged because others do good in a way which they do not approve of. God gives success to others, and because God has not accommodated himself to their views of what is right, and done it in the way which they would have prescribed, they are enraged and filled with envy at men more successful than themselves. ¶ *Communed one with another.* Spoke together, or laid a plan.

12. *A mountain.* Jesus was accustomed to resort to such places to hold communion with God. Mark vi. 46. He did it because such places were retired, free from interruption, and fitted by impressiveness and grandeur to raise the thoughts to the God that had formed the high hills, and the deep shaded groves. ¶ *All night in prayer to God.* There has been a difference of opinion about this passage, whether it means that he spent the night in the act of praying to God, or in a place of prayer. The Jews had places of prayer, called oratories, built out of their cities or towns, where they could retire from the bustle of a city, and hold communion with God. They were built on the banks of rivers, see Acts xvi. 13; or in groves, or on hills. They were rude enclosures, made by building a rough wall of stone around a level piece of ground, and capable of accommodating a small number who might resort thither to pray. But the

Peter,)<sup>5</sup> and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

16 And Judas<sup>6</sup> the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

17 ¶ And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> John i. 42. <sup>6</sup> Jude 1. <sup>7</sup> Matt. iv. 25. Mark iii. 7, 8.

more probable opinion is, that he spent the whole night in supplication. For, 1. This is the obvious meaning of the passage. 2. The object for which he went out was to pray. 3. It was an occasion of great importance. He was about to send out his apostles, to lay the foundation of his religion, and he therefore set apart this time specially to seek the divine blessing. 4. It was no unusual thing for Jesus to spend much time in prayer; and we are not to wonder that he passed an entire night in supplication. If it be asked why Jesus should pray at all if he was divine, we answer, that he was also a man, a man subject to the same sufferings as others, and as a man needing the divine blessing. There is no more inconsistency in his praying, than there was in his eating. Both were means, and both equally consistent with his being divine. But Jesus was also Mediator, and as such it was proper to seek the divine direction and blessing. In this case, Jesus has set us an example that we should follow in his steps. In great emergencies, when we have important duties, or are about to encounter special difficulties, we should seek the divine blessing and direction by prayer. We should set apart an unusual portion of time for supplication. Nay, if we pass the whole night in prayer, it should not be charged as enthusiasm. Our Saviour did it. Men of the world often pass whole nights in plans of gain, or in dissipation, and shall it be esteemed strange that Christians should spend an equal portion of time in the far more important business of religion?

13—16. See Note, Matt. x. 1—4.

17. *And stood in the plain.* It is not

a great multitude of people out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed <sup>1</sup> of their diseases ;

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch <sup>2</sup> him: for <sup>3</sup> there went virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

20 ¶ And <sup>4</sup> he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *be ye* <sup>5</sup> poor: for your's is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed *are ye* that hunger <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cii.; cvii. 17—20. <sup>2</sup> Num. xxi. 6, 9. Matt. xiv. 36. John iii. 14, 15. <sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 46. Mark v. 30. <sup>4</sup> Matt. v. 2—12. <sup>5</sup> Jas. ii. 5. <sup>6</sup> Isa. lv. 1.

affirmed however, that he stood in the plain when he delivered the following discourse. There has been some doubt whether the following discourse is the same as that recorded in Matt. v. vi. vii.; or whether our Saviour repeated the substance of that discourse, and that Luke recorded it as he repeated it. The reasons which have led many to suppose that they refer to the same, are: 1. That the beginning and the close are alike. 2. That the substance of each is the same. And, 3. That after the discourse was delivered, both affirm that Jesus went to Capernaum, and healed the servant of the centurion. Matt. viii. 5—13. Luke vii. 1—10. On the other hand, Matthew says that the sermon was delivered on the mountain, Matt. v. 1; it is thought to be implied that Luke affirms that it was in the plain. Matthew says that he sat; Luke that he stood. Yet there is no reason to suppose that there is a difference in the evangelists. Jesus spent the night on the mountain in prayer. In the morning he descended into the open plain, and healed many. There is no impropriety in supposing that he, being pressed by multitudes, might retire afterwards into the mountain again, where the people *might* be more conveniently arranged and *seated* to hear him. There he sat, as re-

now: for ye shall be filled. <sup>7</sup> Blessed *are ye* that weep <sup>8</sup> now: for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate <sup>9</sup> you, and when they shall separate <sup>10</sup> you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 Rejoice <sup>11</sup> ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner <sup>12</sup> did their fathers unto the prophets.

24 But woe unto you that are <sup>13</sup> rich! for ye have received <sup>14</sup> your consolation.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. cvii. 9. <sup>8</sup> Isa. lxi. 3. Rev. xxi. 4. <sup>9</sup> John xvii. 14. <sup>10</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20; iii. 14; iv. 14. <sup>11</sup> Acts v. 41. Col. i. 24. Jas. i. 2. <sup>12</sup> Acts vii. 52. Heb. xi. 32—39. <sup>13</sup> Hab. ii. 9. Jas. v. 1. <sup>14</sup> Ch. xvi. 25.

corded by Matthew, and delivered the discourse. For it is to be observed that Luke does not say that he delivered the sermon on the plain, but only that he healed the sick there. ¶ *Tyre and Sidon*. See Note, Matt. xi. 21.

18. *Vexed*. The word *vex* with us means to provoke, or irritate by petty provocations. Here it means, however, to afflict, to torment, denoting deep and heavy trials. ¶ *Unclean spirits*. Demons that were impure and unholy, having a delight in tormenting, and in inflicting painful and loathsome diseases.

19. *Virtue*. Healing power. See Note, Mark v. 30.

20—49. See this passage fully illustrated in the sermon on the mount in Matthew.

21. *That hunger now*. Matthew has it, "that hunger and thirst after righteousness." Matthew has expressed more fully what Luke has briefly, but there is no contradiction.

24—26. These verses have been omitted by Matthew. They seem to have been spoken to the Pharisees. ¶ *Who are rich*. In this world's goods. They loved them, they had sought for them, they found their consolation in them. It implies, farther, that they would not seek or receive consolation from the go-

25 Woe unto you that are full!<sup>1</sup> for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh<sup>2</sup> now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well<sup>3</sup> of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 ¶ But I say unto you which hear, Love<sup>4</sup> your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them that curse you, and<sup>5</sup> pray for them which despitefully use you.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxviii. 7; lxx. 13. <sup>2</sup> Prov. xiv. 13. Eph. v. 4. <sup>3</sup> John xv. 19. 1 John iv. 5. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 35. Ex. xxiii. 4, 5. Prov. xxv. 21. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xxiii. 34. Acts vii. 60.

pel. They were proud and would not seek it; satisfied, and did not desire it; filled with cares, and had no time or disposition to attend to it. All the consolation which they had reason to expect, they had received. Alas! how poor and worthless is such consolation, compared with that which the gospel would give.

¶ *Woe unto you that are full.* Not hungry. Satisfied with their wealth, and not feeling their need of any thing better than earthly wealth can give. Many, alas! are thus full. They profess to be satisfied. They desire nothing but wealth, and a sufficiency to satisfy the wants of the body. They have no anxiety for the riches that shall endure for ever. ¶ *Ye shall hunger.* Your property shall be taken away; you shall leave it, or you shall see that it is of little value. And then you shall see the need of something better, feel your want and wretchedness, and shall hunger for something to satisfy the desires of a dying, sinful soul. ¶ *That laugh now.* Are happy, or thoughtless, or gay, or filled with levity. *Shall mourn and weep.* The time is coming when you shall sorrow deeply. In sickness, in calamity, in the prospect of death, in the fear of eternity, your laughter shall be turned into sorrow. There is a place where you cannot laugh; and there you will see the folly of having passed the proper time of preparing for such scenes in levity and folly. Alas! how many thus spend their youth. And

29 And<sup>6</sup> unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; and him<sup>7</sup> that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.

30 Give<sup>8</sup> to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again.

31 And<sup>9</sup> as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. v. 29. <sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 7. <sup>8</sup> Deut. xv. 7, 8, 10. Prov. xix. 17; xxi. 26. Matt. v. 42. <sup>9</sup> Matt. vii. 12.

many weep when it is too late. God gives them over, and laughs at their calumny, and mocks when their fear comes. Prov. i. 26. To be happy in such scenes, it is necessary to be sober, humble, pious in early life. Then we need not weep in the day of calamity; there is no terror in death, there is nothing to fear in the grave.

26. *When all men shall speak well of you.* When they shall praise or applaud you. The world will not praise or applaud my doctrine. They are opposed to it. And therefore if they speak well of you and of your teaching, it is proof that you do not teach the true doctrine. If not, then there will be woe upon you. It men teach false doctrines for true, if they declare that God has spoken what he has not spoken, and if they oppose what he has delivered, then heavy punishments will await them. ¶ *For so did their fathers.* The fathers or ancestors of this people, the ancient Jews. ¶ *To the false prophets.* Men who pretended to be of God, who delivered their own doctrines as the truth of God, and accommodated themselves to the desires of the people. Of this number were the prophets of Babel, and the false prophets who appeared in the time of Jeremiah, &c.

27, 28. See Matt. v. 44, 45.

29. See Matt. v. 39, 40.

30. See Matt. v. 42.

31. See Matt. vii. 12.

32—36. See Matt. v. 46—48.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend to *them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies,<sup>1</sup> and do good, and lend,<sup>2</sup> hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and <sup>3</sup>ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge <sup>4</sup>not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 27. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxxvii. 26; exil. 5. <sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 45. <sup>4</sup> Matt. vii. 1. Isa. lxv. 5. Rom. ii. 1, 2; xiv. 3, 4. 1<sup>o</sup>—1<sup>o</sup>. Jas. iv. 11, 12.

37—42. See Matt. vii. 1—5.

38. *Good measure.* They shall give you good measure, or full measure. ¶ *Pressed down.* As figs or grapes might be, and thus many more might be put into the measure. ¶ *Shaken together.* To make it be more compact, and thus to give more. ¶ *Running over.* So full that the measure would overflow. ¶ *Shall men give.* This is said to be the reward of giving to the poor and needy. And the meaning is that the man who is liberal shall find others liberal to him in dealing with them, and when he is also in circumstances of want. A man who is himself kind to the poor, who has that character established, shall find many who are ready to help him abundantly when he is in want. He that is parsimonious, close, niggardly, shall find few, or none, who will aid him. ¶ *In your bosom.* That is, to you. The word *bosom* here has reference to a custom among oriental nations of making the bosom or front part of their garments large, so that articles could be carried in them, answering the purpose of our pockets. Compare Ex. iv. 6, 7. Ruth iii. 15. Prov. vi. 27.

38 Give, and it shall be given <sup>5</sup>unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. <sup>6</sup>For <sup>7</sup>with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake a parable unto them, Can <sup>8</sup>the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

40 The <sup>9</sup>disciple is not above his master: but every one <sup>10</sup>that is perfect shall be as his master.

41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye,

<sup>5</sup> Prov. xix. 17. Matt. x. 42. <sup>6</sup> Psa. lxxix. 12. <sup>7</sup> Matt. vii. 2. Mark iv. 21. Jas. ii. 13. <sup>8</sup> Matt. xv. 14. <sup>9</sup> Matt. x. 24. John xiii. 16; xv. 20. <sup>10</sup> Or, shall be perfected as his master.

39. *A parable.* A proverb, or similitude. See Matt. xv. 14.

40. *The disciple is not, &c.* The learner is not above his teacher, does not know more, and must expect to fare no better. This seems to have been spoken to show them that they were not to expect that their disciples would go beyond them in attainments; that if they were blind, their followers would be blind also; and that, therefore, it was important for them to understand fully the doctrines of the gospel, and not to be blind leaders of the blind. ¶ *Every one that is perfect.* The word rendered *is perfect* means sometimes to repair or mend, and is thus applied to mending nets. Matt. iv. 21. Mark i. 19. Hence it means to repair or amend in a moral sense, or to make whole or complete. Here it means evidently thoroughly instructed or reformed. The Christian shall be like his master, holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from sinners. He shall copy his example, and grow into the likeness of his Redeemer. Nor can any other be a Christian.

41, 42. See Matt. vii. 3—5.

when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast <sup>1</sup> out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

43 For <sup>2</sup> a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 For <sup>3</sup> every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they <sup>4</sup> grapes.

45 A <sup>5</sup> good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 ¶ And why call ye me, <sup>6</sup> Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

48 He <sup>7</sup> is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that

house, and <sup>8</sup> could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. <sup>9</sup>

49 But he <sup>10</sup> that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; <sup>11</sup> and the ruin of that house was great.

## CHAPTER VII.

*The centurion's servant healed, 1—10. The widow's son at Nain raised, 11—17. John's inquiry from his prison, 18—23. Testimony of Jesus to John, 24—35. Simon's house, 36. The woman there, 37—39. Forgiveness and grateful love, 40—50.*

NOW <sup>12</sup> when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear <sup>13</sup> unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

5 For he loveth <sup>14</sup> our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

6 Then Jesus went with them.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 10 Jude 24. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xli. 1—3: ixii. 2. <sup>3</sup> 18 Jns. i. 24—26. <sup>4</sup> Prov. xxviii. 18. Hos. v. 14. <sup>5</sup> Matt. viii. 5—13. <sup>6</sup> Job xxxi. 15 Prov. xxix. 21. <sup>7</sup> 1 Kin. v. 1. Gal. v. 6. 1 John iii. 14; v. 1, 2.

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xviii. 17. Rom. ii. 1, 21—23. <sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 16, 17. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xii. 33. <sup>4</sup> A grape. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xii. 35. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xiii. 25. <sup>7</sup> Mal. i. 6. <sup>8</sup> Matt. vii. 21; xxv. 11. <sup>9</sup> Gal. vi. 7. <sup>10</sup> Matt. vii. 23, 26.

43, 44. See Matt. vii. 16—18.

45. This verse is not found in the sermon on the mount, as recorded by Matthew, but is recorded by him in ch. xii. 35.

46—49. See Matt. vii. 21—27.

## CHAPTER VII.

1—10 See Matt. viii. 5—13.

1. In the audience of the people. In the hearing of the people.

2. Who was dear unto him. That is, he was valuable, trusty, and honoured.

4. They besought him instantly. Urgently, or earnestly. ¶ He was worthy. The centurion. He had shown favour to the Jews, and it was not improper to show him a kindness.



And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble <sup>1</sup> not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say <sup>2</sup> in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, <sup>3</sup> having under me soldiers, and I say unto <sup>4</sup> one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, <sup>5</sup> not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 49. <sup>2</sup> Psa. cxli. 20. <sup>3</sup> Acts xxii. 25, 26; xxiii. 23. <sup>4</sup> This man. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20. Matt. ix. 33. Rom. iii. 1-3; ix. 4-5.

11. *A city called Nain.* This city was in Galilee, in the boundaries of the tribe of Issachar. It was about two miles south of Mount Tabor, and not far from Capernaum. It is now a small village inhabited by Jews, Mahometans, and Christians.

12. *The gate of the city.* Cities were surrounded by walls, to defend them from their enemies. They were entered through gates placed at convenient distances from each other. In most cities it was not allowed to bury the dead within the walls. Hence they were borne to some convenient burial place, in the vicinity of the city. ¶ *A dead man carried out.* A funeral procession. Anciently no Jews were buried within the walls of the city, except the kings and distinguished persons. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. 2 Kings xxi. 18. The custom of burying within cities, and especially within the walls of churches, or in their vicinity, had its origin among

11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the <sup>6</sup> bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, <sup>7</sup> Arise.

15 And he that was dead <sup>8</sup> sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet <sup>9</sup> is risen up among us; and, That <sup>10</sup> God hath visited his people.

<sup>6</sup> Or, coffin. <sup>7</sup> Ch. viii. 54. Acts ix. 40. Rom. iv. 17. <sup>8</sup> 2 Kin. iv. 32-37; xii. 21. John xi. 44. <sup>9</sup> ch. xxiv. 19. <sup>10</sup> ch. i. 68.

Christians very early. Yet perhaps few customs are more deleterious to health than burials within large cities, especially within the walls of frequented buildings. The effluvia from dead bodies is excessively unwholesome. Burial places should be in situations of retirement; far from the tread of the gay and busy world, where all the feelings may be still and calm, and where there can be no injury to health from the mouldering bodies of the dead.

16 *Came a fear on all.* An awe, or solemnity at the presence of one who had power to raise the dead, and at the miracle which had been performed. ¶ *Glorified God.* Praised, or honoured God, that he had sent such a prophet. ¶ *And that God hath visited his people.* Some said one thing and some another, but all expressing their belief that God had showed peculiar favour to the people. ¶ *Hath visited.* See Luke i. 68.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judæa, and throughout all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

19 ¶ And <sup>1</sup> John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? <sup>2</sup> or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in the same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight.

22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 2. <sup>2</sup> Deut. xviii. 15—18. Psa. cx. 1—4. Isa. vii. 14. Zech. ix. 9. <sup>3</sup> John i. 46.

The raising of this young man was one of the most decisive and instructive of our Lord's miracles. There was no doubt that he was dead. There could be no delusion, and no agreement to impose on the people. He came near to the city with no reference to this young man, he met the funeral procession as it were by accident, and by a word he restored the young man to life. All those who had the best opportunity of judging—the mother, the friends—believed him to be dead, and were about to bury him. The evidence that he came to life was decisive. He sat up, he spake, and all were impressed with the full assurance that God had raised him to life. Many witnesses were present, and none doubted that Jesus, by a word, had restored him to his weeping mother.

The whole scene was affecting. Here was a widowed mother, who was following her only son, her stay, and hope, to the grave. He was borne along, one in the prime of life, and the only comfort of his parent, impressive proof that the young, the useful, the vigorous, and the lovely, may die. Jesus met them, appa-

John what things ye have seen and heard; how <sup>4</sup> that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor <sup>5</sup> the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended <sup>6</sup> in me.

24 ¶ And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. <sup>7</sup>

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? <sup>8</sup> Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. <sup>5</sup> Ch. iv. 18. Jaa. ii. 3. <sup>6</sup> Ch. ii. 34. Isa. viii. 14, 15. Matt. xi. 6; xiii. 57. John vi. 66. <sup>1</sup> Cor. i. 21—23. <sup>2</sup> 2 Sam. xix. 35. Est. i. 3, 11. <sup>3</sup> Ch. i. 76.

rently a stranger. He approached the procession, as if he had something important to say, he touched the bier, and the procession stood still. He was full of compassion for the weeping parent; and, by a word, restored the youth, stretched upon the bier, to life. The youth sat up, and spake. Jesus therefore had power over the dead. He also has power to raise sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, to life. He can speak the word; and, though in their death of sin they are borne along towards ruin, he can open their eyes and raise them up, and restore them revived to real life, or to their friends. Often he raises up children in this manner, and gives them, converted to God, to their friends; imparting as real joy as he gave to the widow of Nain, by raising her son from the dead. And every child should remember, if he has pious parents, that there is no way in which he can give so much joy to them as by embracing him who is the resurrection and the life, and resolving to live to his glory.

19—35. See this passage explained in Matt. xi. 2—19.

27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, <sup>1</sup> Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist : but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified <sup>2</sup> God, being baptized <sup>3</sup> with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers <sup>4</sup> rejected the counsel <sup>5</sup> of God <sup>6</sup> against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Whereunto <sup>7</sup> then shall I liken the men

of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33 For John the Baptist came <sup>8</sup> neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The <sup>9</sup> Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But <sup>10</sup> wisdom is justified of all her children.

36 ¶ And <sup>11</sup> one of the Pharisees

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 15—17. Mal. iii. 1. <sup>2</sup> Psa. li. 4. Rom. iii. 4. <sup>3</sup> Ch. iii. 12. Matt. iii. 5, 6. <sup>4</sup> Or, *frustrated*. <sup>5</sup> Acts xx. 27. <sup>6</sup> Or, *within themselves*. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xi. 16—19.

<sup>8</sup> Ch. i. 15. Matt. iii. 4. Mark i. 6. <sup>9</sup> Ver. 36. John ii. 2; xii. 2. <sup>10</sup> Prov. viii. 32—36; xvii. 16. <sup>11</sup> Matt. xxvi. 6—13. Mark xiv. 3—9. John xii. 2—9.

29. *The people.* The common people. ¶ *That heard him.* That heard John. ¶ *The publicans.* The tax-gatherers, the worst kind of people, many of whom however were converted. ¶ *Justified God.* Considered God as just or right in the counsel which he gave by John, to wit, in calling men to repentance, and denouncing future wrath on the impenitent. Compare Matt. xi. 19. ¶ *Being baptized, &c.* They showed that they approved of the message of God, by submitting to the ordinance which he commanded, the ordinance of baptism. This verse and the following are not to be considered as the words of Luke, but the continuation of the discourse of our Lord. He is saying what took place in regard to John. Among the common people he was approved and obeyed, among the rich and learned he was despised.

30. *But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected, &c.* It appears from Matt. iii. that some of the Pharisees came to John to be baptized; but still this is entirely consistent with the supposition that the great mass of Pharisees and lawyers rejected him. ¶ *The counsel of God.* The counsel of God towards them was the

solemn admonition by John, to repent and be baptized, and be prepared to receive the Messiah. This was the command, or revealed will of God, in relation to them. When it is said that they rejected the counsel of God, it does not mean that they could frustrate his purposes, but merely that they violated his commands. Men cannot frustrate the real purposes of God; but they can condemn his messages; violate his commands; and thus reject the counsel which he gives them, and despise the desire which he manifests for their welfare. ¶ *Against themselves.* To their own hurt, or detriment. The rejection of the counsel of God will deeply injure them. God is wise and good. He knows what is best for us. He, therefore, that rejects what God commands, rejects it to his own injury. It cannot be well for any mortal to despise what God commands him to do.

31—35. See this passage explained in Notes on Matt. xi. 16—19. *And the Lord said.* This clause is wanting in almost all the manuscripts, and is omitted by the best critics.

36. *One of the Pharisees.* His name was Simon, ver. 40. Nothing more is

desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

87 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, <sup>1</sup> when he knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster-box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 34. Ch. v. 32. 1 Tim. i. 15.

down of him. It is not improbable, however, from what follows, ver. 40—47, that he had been healed by the Saviour of some afflictive disease, and made this act to show his gratitude. ¶ *Sat down to meat.* The original word here means only that he placed himself, or reclined at the table. The notion of sitting at meals, is taken from modern customs, and as not practised by the Jews. See Note on Matt. xxiii. 6. ¶ *Meat.* Supper, food of any kind. Sat down to eat.

37. *In the city.* What city is meant unknown. Some have supposed it was Samaria, some Capernaum, and some Jerusalem. ¶ *Which was a sinner.* Who was depraved, or wicked. This woman, seems, was known to be a sinner, perhaps an abandoned woman, or a prostitute. It is certain that she had much to be forgiven; and she had probably passed her life in crime. ¶ *An alabaster-box,* &c. See Note, Mark xiv. 3.

38. *Stood at his feet.* They reclined, at their meals, on their left side, and their feet therefore were extended from the table, so that persons could easily approach them. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6.

*Began to wash his feet.* The Jews wore sandals. These were taken off when they entered a house. It was an act of hospitality and kindness to wash the feet of a guest. The woman therefore, began to show her love for him, and at the same time her humility and penitence, by pouring forth a flood of tears, and washing his feet, in the manner of a servant. ¶ *Kissed his feet.* The kiss was an emblem of love and affection. In this manner she testified her love for the Lord Jesus, and at the same time her humility, and sense of sin, by kissing his feet. There could be few

expressions of penitence more deep and tender than were these. A sense of all her sins rushed over her mind; her heart burst at the remembrance of them, and at the presence of the pure Redeemer; with deep sorrow she humbled herself, and sought forgiveness. She showed her love for him by a kiss of affection; her humility, by bathing his feet; her veneration, by breaking a costly box—perhaps procured by a guilty life—and anointing his feet. In this way we should all come, embracing him as the loved Redeemer, humbled at his feet, and offering all we have, all that we have gained in lives of sin, in our professions, and merchandise, and toil, while we were sinners, offering all to his service. Thus shall we show the sincerity of our repentance, and thus shall we hear his gracious voice pronounce our sins forgiven.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if <sup>2</sup> he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this* is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. <sup>3</sup>

40 And Jesus answering said

<sup>2</sup> John ix. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xv. 2.

expressions of penitence more deep and tender than were these. A sense of all her sins rushed over her mind; her heart burst at the remembrance of them, and at the presence of the pure Redeemer; with deep sorrow she humbled herself, and sought forgiveness. She showed her love for him by a kiss of affection; her humility, by bathing his feet; her veneration, by breaking a costly box—perhaps procured by a guilty life—and anointing his feet. In this way we should all come, embracing him as the loved Redeemer, humbled at his feet, and offering all we have, all that we have gained in lives of sin, in our professions, and merchandise, and toil, while we were sinners, offering all to his service. Thus shall we show the sincerity of our repentance, and thus shall we hear his gracious voice pronounce our sins forgiven.

39. *He spake within himself.* Thought.

¶ *If he were a prophet.* The word prophet here means not one who predicts future events, but one who knows the hearts of men. If Jesus had been sent of God as a prophet, he supposed he would have known entirely the character of the woman and would have rebuked her. ¶ *Would have known,* &c. Because Jesus did not rebuke her, and drive her from his presence, Simon inferred that he could not be acquainted with her character. The Pharisees considered it improper to hold communion with those who were notorious sinners. They judged our Saviour by their own rules, and supposed he would act in the same way; and Simon therefore concluded that he did not know her character, and could not be a prophet. Jesus did not refuse the society of the guilty. He came to save the lost.

unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred <sup>1</sup> pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing<sup>2</sup> to pay, he <sup>3</sup> frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he* to whom he forgave

<sup>1</sup> See Matt. xviii. 28. <sup>2</sup> Ps. xlix. 7, 8. Rom. v. 6. <sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxii. 1—5. Rom. iv. 5—8.

And no person ever came to him so sure of finding him a friend, as those who came conscious that they were deeply depraved, and mourning on account of their crimes. ¶ *That toucheth him.* The touch of a Gentile, or a person singularly wicked, they supposed to be polluting, and the Pharisees avoided it. See Matt. ix. 11.

41. *A certain creditor.* A man who had lent money, or sold property, the payment for which was yet due. ¶ *Five hundred pence.* Nearly fifteen pounds. ¶ *Fifty.* Not quite thirty shillings.

42. *Frankly forgave.* Freely forgave, or forgave entirely, without any compensation. This is not designed to express any thing about the way in which God forgives sinners. He forgives, forgives freely, but it is in connexion with the atonement made by the Lord Jesus. If it was a mere debt which we owed to God, he might forgive as this creditor did, without any equivalent. But it is crime which he forgives. He pardons as a moral governor. A parent might forgive a debt without any equivalent; but he cannot pardon an offending child without regarding his character as a parent, the truth of his threatenings, the good order of his house, and the maintenance of his authority. So our sins against God, though they are called debts, are called so figuratively. It is not an affair of money, and God cannot forgive us, without maintaining his word, the honour of his government, and law; in other words, without an atonement. It is clear that by the creditor here, our Saviour meant to designate God; and by

most And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly<sup>4</sup> judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss:<sup>5</sup> but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxvi. 16—18. 1 Cor. xv. 2. 2 Cor. v. 14. 1 Tim. i. 13—16. <sup>5</sup> 2 Sam. xv. 3. Rom. xvi. 16. 1 Thess. v. 28.

the debtors, sinners, and the woman present. Simon, whose life had been comparatively upright, was denoted by the one that owed fifty pence, the woman, who had been an open and shameless sinner, was represented by the one that owed five hundred. Yet neither could pay. Both must be forgiven, or perish. So, however much difference there is among men, yet all need the pardoning mercy of God, and all, without that, must perish.

43. *I suppose, &c.* He saw not the point of our Lord's parable. By thus saying, therefore, he condemned himself, and prepared the way for our Lord's reproof.

44. *Seest thou this woman?* You see what this woman has done to me, compared with what you have done. She has shown to me expressions of regard, which you, in your own house, have not shown. ¶ *I entered into thine house.* I came at your invitation, where I might expect all the usual rites of hospitality. ¶ *Thou gavest me no water, &c.* Among eastern people it was customary, before eating, to wash the feet, and to do this, or to bring water for it, was one of the rites of hospitality. See Gen. xviii. 4. Judg. xix. 21. The reasons for this were, that they wore sandals which covered only the bottom of the feet, and that when they sat they reclined on couches or sofas. It became therefore necessary that the feet should be often washed.

45. *No kiss.* The kiss was a token of affection, or a very common mode of salutation, and Simon had even neglected this

46 My <sup>1</sup> head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxiii. 5; civ. 15. Amos vi. 6.

mark of welcoming him to his house. It was often used among men as a sign of salutation. Comp. Gen. xxxiii. 4. Exod. xviii. 7. Matt. xxvi. 49. ¶ *Hath not ceased to kiss my feet.* How striking the difference between the conduct of Simon and this woman! Simon, with all the richness of a splendid preparation, had omitted the common marks of regard and affection. She, in humility, had bowed at his feet, had watered them with tears, and had not ceased to kiss them. The most splendid entertainments do not always express the most welcome. There may be much insincerity, much seeking of popularity, or some other motive, but no such motive could have operated in inducing a broken-hearted sinner to wash the Saviour's feet with tears.

46. *My head with oil.* The custom of pouring oil upon the head was universal among the Jews. The oil used was sweet oil, or oil of olives, prepared in such a way as to give an agreeable smell. It was also used to render the hair more smooth and elegant. See 2 Sam. xii. 20; xiv. 2. Ruth iii. 3. Psa. xxiii. 5. ¶ *With ointment.* This ointment was a mixture of various aromatics, and was therefore far more costly and precious than the oil commonly used for anointing the head. Her conduct, compared with that of Simon, was therefore more striking. He did not give even the common oil for his head, used on such occasions. She had applied to his feet a far more precious and valuable unguent. He, therefore, showed comparatively little love. She showed much.

47. *Wherefore I say unto thee.* As the result of this, or because she has done this; meaning by this, that she had given evidence that her sins had been forgiven. The inquiry with Simon was, whether it was proper for Jesus to touch her, or to allow her to touch him, because she was such a sinner, ver. 39. Jesus said, in substance, to Simon, grant that she has been as great a sinner as you affirm, and even grant that if she had continued so, it might be improper to suffer her to touch

Her sins, <sup>2</sup> which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same loveth little.*

<sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 20—26. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Isa. i. 16; lv. 7. Ezek. xvi. 63; xxxvi. 31, 32.

me, yet her conduct shows that her sins have been forgiven. She has evinced much love for me, which is an evidence that she is no longer such a sinner as you suppose, and it is not therefore improper that she should be suffered to come near me. ¶ *For she loved much.* In our translation this would seem to be given as a reason why her sins had been forgiven, that she had loved much before they were pardoned. But this is clearly not the meaning. This would be contrary to the whole New Testament, which supposes that love follows forgiveness, not precedes it; and which nowhere supposes that sins are forgiven because we love God. It would be also contrary to the design of the Saviour here. It was not to show why her sins had been forgiven, but to show that she had given evidence that they actually had been pardoned, that it was proper, so that she should come near to him, and manifest this love. The meaning may be thus expressed. That her sins, so many and aggravated, have been forgiven; that she is no longer such a sinner as you suppose, is manifest from her conduct. She loves much. She shows deep gratitude, penitence, love. Her conduct is the proper expression of that love. While you have shown comparatively little evidence that you felt that your sins were great, and comparatively little love at their being forgiven, she has shown that she felt hers to be great, and has loved much. ¶ *To whom little is forgiven.* He who feels that little has been forgiven, that his sins were not as great as those of others. A man's love to God will be in proportion to the obligation he feels to Him for forgiveness. God is to be loved for his perfections, apart from what he has done for us. But still it is proper that our love should be increased by a consideration of his goodness; and they who feel, as Christians do, that they are the chief of sinners, will regard themselves as under infinite obligation to love God and their Redeemer. No expression of love to him can be beyond what is due.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who<sup>1</sup> is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman,<sup>2</sup> Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace

### CHAPTER VIII.

*The women who befriended Jesus, 1—3. Parable of the sower, 4—15. Of the lighted candle, 16—18. Jesus declares who are his nearest relatives, 19—21.*

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 2, 3. Mark ii. 7. <sup>2</sup> Ch. viii. 48; xviii. 42. Hab. ii. 4. Matt. ix. 22. Mark v. 34.; x. 52. Eph. ii. 8.

48. *Thy sins are forgiven.* What a gracious assurance to the weeping, loving penitent! How that voice, spoken to the troubled sinner, stills his anguish, allays his troubled feelings, and produces peace to the soul! And how manifest is it, that he that could say thus must be God! No man has a right to forgive sin. No man can speak peace to the soul, and give assurance that its transgressions are pardoned. Here, then, Jesus gave indubitable proof that he was God, as well as man, that he was Lord of the conscience, as well as the pitying friend; and that he was as able to read the heart, and give peace there, as to witness the external expression of sorrow for him.

49. *Who is this? &c.* A very pertinent question. Who could he be but God! Man could not do it, and there is no wonder that they were amazed.

50. *Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.* See Mark v. 34.

### CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Every city and village.* Of Galilee. ¶ *The glad tidings of the kingdom of God.* That the kingdom of God was about to come, or his reign in the gospel about to be set up over men. ¶ *The twelve.* The twelve apostles.

2. *Infirmities.* Sickness. ¶ *Mary called Magdalene.* So called from Magdala, the place of her residence. It was situated on the sea of Galilee, south of Capernaum. To this place Jesus retired after feeding the four thousand. See Matt. xv. 39. ¶ *Out of whom went.*

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*The storm on the lake stilled, 22—25. The demoniac of Gadara, 26—40. The daughter of Jairus, and the woman's issue, 41—56.*

AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.

2 And<sup>3</sup> certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out<sup>4</sup> of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvii. 55. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 30. Mark xvi. 2

By the power of Jesus. ¶ *Seven devils.* The word *seven* is often used for an indefinite number, and may signify merely many devils. The expression is used to signify that she was grievously tormented, and rendered, doubtless, insane by the power of evil spirits. See Matt. iv. 24. It has been commonly supposed that Mary Magdalene was a woman of abandoned character. But of this there is not the least evidence. All that we know of her is, that she was formerly grievously afflicted by the presence of those evil spirits; that she was probably cured by Jesus; and that afterward she became one of his most faithful and humble followers. She was present at his crucifixion, John xix. 25, and burial, Mark xv. 47, and she was among those who had prepared the materials to embalm him, Mark xvi. 1 and was the first to go to the sepulch after the resurrection; and, what is particularly interesting in her history, <sup>1</sup> was also the first to whom the risen Redeemer appeared, Mark xvi. 9; and conversation with her is exceeded in interest and pathos by no passage in history, sacred or profane. John 11—18.

3. *Herod's steward.* Herod Antipater who reigned in Galilee. He was a son of Herod the Great. The word *steward* here, means one who has charge of domestic affairs of a family, to perform for it. This office was generally held by a slave who was esteemed the most faithful, and was often conferred as a

any others, which ministered unto <sup>m</sup> of their substance.

4 ¶ And when much people were thither together, and were come him out of every city, he spake <sup>r</sup> a parable :

5 A <sup>s</sup> sower went out to sow his seed : and as he sowed, some fell by the way-side ; and it was trodden <sup>s</sup> down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock ; <sup>d</sup> and as soon as it was sprang up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns ; <sup>d</sup> and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred-fold. <sup>d</sup> And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. <sup>7</sup>

9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be ?

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God : but to others in <sup>r</sup>ables ; that seeing <sup>s</sup> they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 Now <sup>9</sup> the parable is this : The <sup>10</sup> seed is the word of God.

12 Those by the way-side are they that hear ; then cometh the evil, and taketh away <sup>11</sup> the word

<sup>12</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 2. <sup>13</sup> Matt. xiii. 3—8. Mark iv. —8. <sup>14</sup> Psal. cxix. 118. Matt. v. 13. <sup>15</sup> Jer. 2. <sup>16</sup> Jer. iv. 3. <sup>17</sup> Gen. xxvi. 12. <sup>18</sup> Prov. x. 12. Jer. xlii. 15 ; xxv. 4. <sup>19</sup> Isa. vi. 9. Matt. xiii. 18. Mark iv. 14—20. <sup>20</sup> 1 Pet. 23. <sup>21</sup> Prov. iv. 5. Isa. lxv. 11. Jas. i. 23, 24.

fidelity. ¶ *Ministered.* Imparted or his support. ¶ *Of their substance.* Their property ; their possessions. Christians then believed, when they professed to follow Christ, that it was proper to give all up to him, their property, as well as their hearts. And the same thing is still re-

quired, that is, to commit all that we have to his disposal ; to be willing to part with it for the promotion of his glory ; and to leave it when he calls us away from it.

13 They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive <sup>12</sup> the word with joy ; and these have no root, <sup>13</sup> which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with <sup>14</sup> cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit <sup>15</sup> to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, <sup>16</sup> having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with <sup>17</sup> patience

16 ¶ No <sup>18</sup> man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed ; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 For <sup>19</sup> nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest ; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

18 Take <sup>20</sup> heed therefore how ye hear : for <sup>21</sup> whosoever hath, to him shall be given ; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth <sup>22</sup> to have.

<sup>12</sup> Psal. cvi. 12, 13. Isa. lviii. 2. Gal. iii. 1. 4 ; iv. 15. <sup>13</sup> Prov. xii. 3. Hos. vi. 4. <sup>14</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. 2 Tim. iv. 10. 1 John ii. 15—17. <sup>15</sup> John xv. 6. <sup>16</sup> Jer. xxxii. 39. <sup>17</sup> Heb. x. 30. Jas. i. 4. <sup>18</sup> Ch. xi. 33. Matt. v. 15. Mark iv. 21. <sup>19</sup> Ch. xii. 2. <sup>20</sup> Rom. xii. 14. Matt. x. 26. 1 Cor. iv. 5. <sup>21</sup> Jas. i. 21—25. <sup>22</sup> Ch. xix. 26. Matt. xiii. 12 ; xxv. 29. <sup>23</sup> Or, *thinketh that he hath.*

quired, that is, to commit all that we have to his disposal ; to be willing to part with it for the promotion of his glory ; and to leave it when he calls us away from it.

4—15. See the parable of the sower explained in Matt. xiii. 1—23.

16—18. See Mark iv. 21—25.



19 Then <sup>1</sup> came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

20 And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 ¶ Now <sup>2</sup> it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and <sup>3</sup> awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 ¶ And <sup>4</sup> they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city

a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment <sup>5</sup> me not.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.<sup>6</sup>

32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled,<sup>7</sup> and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 46—50. Mark iii. 31—35. <sup>2</sup> Matt. viii. 23—27. Mark iv. 35—41. <sup>3</sup> Ps. xlv. 23. Isa. li. 9, 10. <sup>4</sup> Matt. viii. 28—34. Mark v. 2—20.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. xxvii. 1. Jas. ii. 19. Rev. xx. 10. <sup>6</sup> Rev. xx. 3. <sup>7</sup> Acts xix. 16, 17.

and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right<sup>1</sup> mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw it told him by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 ¶ Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him<sup>2</sup> to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with<sup>3</sup> him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house,<sup>4</sup> and shew how great things<sup>5</sup> God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.

41 ¶ And, behold, there<sup>6</sup> came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went, the people thronged him.

43 ¶ And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which

had spent<sup>7</sup> all her living upon physicians,<sup>8</sup> neither could be healed of any,

44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and<sup>9</sup> immediately her issue of blood stanch'd.

45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue<sup>10</sup> is gone out of me.

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid,<sup>11</sup> she came trembling,<sup>12</sup> and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

49 ¶ While<sup>13</sup> he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler<sup>14</sup> of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not:<sup>15</sup> believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept, and bewailed

<sup>1</sup> Ps. ii. 10.    <sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 39.    <sup>3</sup> Deut. x. 9, 21.    <sup>4</sup> Ps. cxvi. 12, 16.    <sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. v. 8.    <sup>6</sup> Ps. cxlvi. 2, 3.    <sup>7</sup> Matt. ix. 18—26.    <sup>8</sup> Mark . 23—43.

<sup>9</sup> 2 Chron. xvi. 12.    <sup>10</sup> Isa. lv. 2.    <sup>11</sup> Job xlii. 4.    <sup>12</sup> Matt. viii. 3; xx. 34.    <sup>13</sup> Luke xlii. 13.    <sup>14</sup> Ch. vi. 19.    <sup>15</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 9.    <sup>16</sup> Ps. xxxviii. 9.    <sup>17</sup> Hos. v. 3.    <sup>18</sup> Isa. lxvi. 2.    <sup>19</sup> Hos. xlii. 1.    <sup>20</sup> Acts xvi. 29.    <sup>21</sup> Matt. ix. 23—26.    <sup>22</sup> Mark v. 35—43.    <sup>23</sup> Ver. 41, 42.    <sup>24</sup> John xi. 25.    <sup>25</sup> Rom. iv. 17.

her : but he said, Weep not ; she is not dead, but sleepeth.<sup>1</sup>

53 And they laughed him to<sup>2</sup> scorn, knowing that she was dead.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid,<sup>3</sup> arise.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway : and he commanded to give her meat.

56 And her parents were astonished : but he charged<sup>4</sup> them that they should tell no man what was done.

## CHAPTER IX.

*The twelve sent out to preach, 1—6.*

*Herod's wish to see Jesus, 7—9. The five thousand fed, 10—17. Opinions about Jesus, 18—20. His sufferings foretold, 21—22. Jesus teaches self-denial, 23—27. The transfiguration, 28—36.*

*The young demoniac, 37—42. Christ again foretels his sufferings, 43—45.*

*The disciples dispute about greatness, 46—48. The disciples' false zeal, 49*

*—56. Half-hearted disciples, 57—62.*

**T**HEN<sup>5</sup> he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take<sup>6</sup> nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money ; neither have two coats apiece.

<sup>1</sup> John xi. 11, 13. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xvi. 14. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxii. 7. <sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 14. John xi. 43. <sup>5</sup> Matt. viii. 4 ; ix. 30. <sup>6</sup> Mark v. 43. <sup>7</sup> Matt. x. 1—15. <sup>8</sup> Mark iii. 13—19 ; vi. 7—11. <sup>9</sup> Ch. x. 4—12 ; xii. 22.

## CHAPTER IX.

1—6. See Matt. x. 1, &c.

7—9. See Matt. xiv. 1, 2 ; Mark vi. 14—16.

10—17. See Matt. xiv. 13—21 ; and Mark vi. 30—44.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake<sup>7</sup> off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.

7 ¶ Now<sup>8</sup> Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him : and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead ;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared ; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded : but who is this, of whom I hear such things ? And<sup>9</sup> he desired to see him.

10 ¶ And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 And the people, when they knew<sup>10</sup> it, followed him : and he received<sup>11</sup> them, and spake unto them of the kingdom<sup>12</sup> of God, and healed them that had need<sup>13</sup> of healing.

12 And<sup>14</sup> when the day began to

<sup>7</sup> Neh. v. 13. <sup>8</sup> Acts xlii. 51 ; xviii. 6. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xiv. 1—12. <sup>10</sup> Mark vi. 14—16. <sup>11</sup> Ch. xxiii. 8. <sup>12</sup> Rom. x. 14, 17. <sup>13</sup> John vi. 37. <sup>14</sup> Acts xxviii. 31. <sup>15</sup> Ch. i. 53 ; v. 31. <sup>16</sup> Heb. iv. 14. <sup>17</sup> Matt. xiv. 15—21. <sup>18</sup> Mark vi. 35—44. <sup>19</sup> John vi. 5—14.

10. *Bethsaida.* A city on the east bank of the river Jordan, near where that river enters into the sea of Tiberias. In the neighbourhood of that city were extensive wastes or deserts.

12. *Day began to wear away.* Drove towards evening.

ar away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert<sup>1</sup> place.

13 But he said unto them, Give them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples,<sup>2</sup> Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up towards heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

18 ¶ And it<sup>4</sup> came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

19 They answering said, John<sup>5</sup> the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom

say ye that I am? Peter<sup>6</sup> answering said, The Christ of God.

21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing,

22 Saying, The<sup>7</sup> Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23 ¶ And he said to them all, If<sup>8</sup> any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

26 For<sup>9</sup> whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 But<sup>10</sup> I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not<sup>11</sup> taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

28 ¶ And<sup>12</sup> it came to pass about an eight days after these<sup>13</sup> sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 19, 20. <sup>2</sup> Eze. xxxiv. 25. <sup>3</sup> xlii. 5. <sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 40. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cvii. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xvi. 13—20. <sup>7</sup> Mark viii. 27—30. <sup>8</sup> Jer. 7, 8. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xiv. 2.

<sup>10</sup> John vi. 69. <sup>11</sup> Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 22. <sup>12</sup> Ch. xiv. 27. <sup>13</sup> Matt. x. 35; xvi. 24. <sup>14</sup> Mark viii. 34. <sup>15</sup> Rom. viii. 13. <sup>16</sup> Col. iii. 5. <sup>17</sup> Matt. x. 33. <sup>18</sup> Mark viii. 38. <sup>19</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 12. <sup>20</sup> Matt. xvi. 28. <sup>21</sup> Mark ix. 1. <sup>22</sup> John viii. 52. <sup>23</sup> Heb. ii. 9. <sup>24</sup> Matt. xvii. 1—13. <sup>25</sup> Mark ix. 2—10. <sup>26</sup> Or, things.

23—26. See Matt. xvi. 13—27; Mark 27—38.

30. *The Christ of God.* The anointed God. The Messiah appointed by God, who had been long promised by him. Note on Matt. i. 1.

28—36. See an account of the transfiguration in Matt. xvii. 1—13, and Mark ix. 2—13.

29. *The fashion.* The appearance. ¶ *Glistening.* Shining like lightning, of a bright, dazzling whiteness. As Mark

of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias :

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy <sup>1</sup> with sleep : and when they were awake, they saw his <sup>2</sup> glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it <sup>3</sup> is good for us to be here : and let us make three tabernacles ; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias : not knowing <sup>4</sup> what he said.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them : and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out

<sup>1</sup> Dan. viii. 18 ; x. 9. <sup>2</sup> John i. 14. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxvii. 4 ; lxxiii. 25. <sup>4</sup> Mark x. 35.

says, "more white than any fuller could make it."

31. *In glory.* Of a glorious appearance. Of an appearance like that which the saints have in heaven. ¶ *His decease.* Literally, his exit, or departure. The word translated here *decease*, that is, exit, or going out, is elsewhere used to denote death. See 2 Pet. i. 15. Death is a departure or going out from this life. In this word there may be an allusion to the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, as that was going out from bondage, pain, and humiliation. So death to a saint is but going forth from a land of captivity and thralldom to one of plenty and freedom, to the land of promise, the Canaan in the skies. ¶ *He should accomplish.* Which was about to take place. Compare Acts xiv. 26.

32. *Heavy with sleep.* Borne down  
(40)

of the cloud, saying, This <sup>5</sup> is my beloved Son : hear <sup>6</sup> him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days <sup>7</sup> any of those things which they had seen.

37 ¶ And <sup>8</sup> it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son : for he is mine <sup>9</sup> only child.

39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out ; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out ; and they could not.<sup>10</sup>

41 And Jesus answering said, O faithless <sup>11</sup> and perverse <sup>12</sup> genera-

<sup>5</sup> Matt. iii. 17. <sup>6</sup> Pet. i. 17, 18. <sup>7</sup> Deut. xviii. 15. <sup>8</sup> Acts iii. 22. <sup>9</sup> Ecc. iii. 7. <sup>10</sup> Matt. xvii. 14—18. Mark ix. 17—27. <sup>11</sup> Zech. xii. 10. <sup>12</sup> Acts xix. 13—16. <sup>13</sup> John xx. 27. Heb. iv. 2. <sup>14</sup> Deut. xxxii. 5. Psa. lxxviii. 8.

with sleep, oppressed, overcome with sleep. It may seem remarkable that they should fall asleep on such an occasion. But we are to bear in mind that it was in the night, and that they were probably weary with the toils of the day. Besides, they did not fall asleep while the transfiguration lasted. While Jesus was praying, or perhaps after he closed, they fell asleep. While they were sleeping, his countenance was changed, and Moses and Elias appeared. The first that they saw of it was after they awoke, being probably awaked by the shining of the light around them.

36. *Jesus was found alone.* That is, the two men had left him. In respect to them he was alone.

37—43. See this passage explained in Matt. xvii. 14—21, and Mark ix. 14—29.

tion, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked<sup>1</sup> the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

43 ¶ And they were all amazed<sup>2</sup> at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears; for<sup>3</sup> the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.<sup>4</sup>

45 But<sup>5</sup> they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

46 ¶ Then<sup>6</sup> there arose a reason-

<sup>1</sup> Mark i. 27. <sup>2</sup> Psa. cxxxix. 14. Zech. viii. 6. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xvii. 22. <sup>4</sup> 2 Sam. xxiv. 14. <sup>5</sup> Ch. ii. 50; xviii. 34. <sup>6</sup> Mark ix. 32. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xviii. 1-5. Mark ix. 34-37.

44. *Let these sayings.* Probably this refers to the sayings of the people, who had seen his miracles, and who on that account, had praised and glorified God. On that ground they had acknowledged him to be Christ. As if he had said, 'I am about to die. You will then be disconsolate, and perhaps doubtful about my being the Christ. Then do you remember these miracles and the confessions of the people, the evidence which I gave you that I was from God.' Or it may mean, 'Remember that I am about to die, and let my sayings in regard to that, sink down into your hearts, for it is a most important event; and you will have need of remembering, when it takes place, that I told you of it.' This last interpretation, however, does not agree so well with the Greek as the former.

45. *It was hid from them.* They had imbibed the common notions of the Jews that he was to be a prince and a conqueror, to deliver the nation. They could not understand how that could be, if he was soon to be delivered into the hands

ing among them, which of them should be greatest.

47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

48 And said unto them, Whosoever<sup>7</sup> shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for<sup>8</sup> he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

49 ¶ And John answered and said, Master, we<sup>9</sup> saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for<sup>10</sup> he that is not against us is for us.

51 ¶ And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should

<sup>7</sup> Matt. x. 40. John xli. 44; xlii. 20. <sup>8</sup> Ch. xiv. 11. Matt. xxiii. 11, 12. <sup>9</sup> Num. xli. 27-29. <sup>10</sup> Ch. xvi. 13. Matt. xii. 30.

of his enemies to die. In this way it was hid from them, not by God, but by their previous false belief. And from this we learn, that the plainest truths of the Bible are unintelligible to many because they have embraced some belief or opinion before, which is erroneous, and which they are unwilling to abandon. The proper way of reading the Bible is to lay aside all previous opinions, and submit entirely to God. The apostles should have supposed that their previous notions of the Messiah were wrong, and should have renounced them. They should have believed that what Jesus then said was consistent with his being the Christ. So we should believe that all that God says is consistent with truth, and should forsake all other opinions.

46-50. See Matt. xviii. 1-5; Mark ix. 33-40.

51. *Should be received up.* The word here translated *received up* means literally a removal from a lower to a higher place, and here it means evidently the solemn ascension of Jesus to heaven. It is often

be received <sup>1</sup> up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, <sup>2</sup> to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi. 19. Acts i. 2. <sup>2</sup> John iv. 4.

used to describe that great event. See Mark xvi. 19. Acts i. 11, 22. 1 Tim. iii. 16. The time appointed for him to be on the earth was about to expire, and he resolved to go to Jerusalem and die. And from this we learn that Jesus made a voluntary sacrifice, that he chose to give his life for the sins of men. Humanly speaking, had he remained in Galilee he would have been safe. But that it might appear that he did not shun danger, and that he was really a voluntary sacrifice, that no man had power over his life except as he was permitted, John xix. 11, he chose to put himself in the way of danger, and even to go into scenes which he knew would end in his death. ¶ *He stedfastly set his face.* He determined to go to Jerusalem, or he set out resolutely. When a man goes toward an object, he may be said to set his face toward it. The expression here means only that he resolved to go, and it implies that he was not appalled by the dangers, that he was determined to brave all, and go up into the midst of his enemies, to die.

52. *Sent messengers.* In the original the word is angels; and the use of that word here shows that the word angel, in the Bible, does not always mean heavenly beings. ¶ *To make ready.* To prepare a place, lodgings, refreshments. He had no reason to expect that he would experience any kind of treatment from the Samaritans if he came suddenly among them, and if they saw he was going to Jerusalem. He therefore made provision beforehand, and thus he has shown us that it is not improper to look out beforehand for the supply of our wants, and to guard against want and poverty. ¶ *Samaritans.* See Matt. x. 5. They had no dealings with the Jews. John iv. 9.

53. *They did not receive him.* Did not entertain him hospitably, or receive him with kindness. ¶ *Because his face was,* &c. Because they ascertained that he

him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias <sup>3</sup> did?

<sup>3</sup> 2 Kin. i. 10, 12.

was going to Jerusalem. One of the subjects of dispute between the Jews and Samaritans was in regard to the proper situation of the temple. The Jews contended that it should be at Jerusalem: the Samaritans, on mount Gerizim; and accordingly they had built one there. They had probably heard of the miracles of Jesus, and that he claimed to be the Messiah. Perhaps they had hope that he would decide that they were right in regard to the building of the temple. Had he decided in that way, they would have received him as the Messiah gladly. But when they saw he was going to the Jews, that by going he would decide in their favour, they resolved to have nothing to do with him, and they rejected him. And from this we may learn, 1. That men wish all the teachers of religion to fall in with their views. 2. That if a doctrine does not accord with their selfish desires, they are very apt to reject it. 3. That if a religious teacher or a doctrine favours a rival sect, it is commonly rejected without examination. And 4. That men, from a regard to their own views and selfishness, often reject religion, as the Samaritans did the Son of God, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

54. *James and John.* They were called Boanerges, sons of thunder, probably on account of their energy and power in preaching the gospel; or of their vehement and rash zeal, a remarkable example of which we have in this instance. Mark iii. 17. ¶ *Wilt thou, &c.* The insult had been offered to Jesus, their friend, and they felt it. But their zeal was rash, and their spirit bad. Vengeance belongs to God. It was not theirs to attempt it. ¶ *Fire from heaven.* Lightning, to consume them. ¶ *As Elias did.* By this they wished to justify their rash zeal. Perhaps, while they were speaking, they saw Jesus look at them with disapprobation, and to vindicate themselves they

55 But he turned, and rebuked him, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For<sup>1</sup> the Son of man is not ~~me~~ to destroy men's lives, but to ~~to~~ *them*. And they went to other village.

57 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> it came to pass, that, they went in the way, a certain ~~we~~ said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, ~~xes~~ have holes, and birds of the *have* nests; but the Son of man ~~th~~ not where to lay *his* head.

John iii. 17; xii. 47. <sup>2</sup> Matt. viii. 19—22.

ferred to the case of Elijah. The case recorded in 2 Kin. i. 10—12.

55. *Ye know not what manner of spirit are of.* You suppose that you are actuated by a proper love for me. But I know not yourselves. It is rather a ~~of~~ of revenge; rather improper feelings towards the Samaritans, than proper feelings towards me. We learn here, 1. That ~~arent~~ zeal for God may be only improper opposition towards our fellow men. That men, when they wish to honour ~~d~~, should examine their spirit, and see here be not improper feeling manifested. That the highest opposition which Jesus sets with is not inconsistent with his ~~ing~~ those who oppose him, and seeking to them good.

56. *For the Son of Man, &c.* You would imitate, in your spirit, the Son of man. He came not to destroy. If he ~~l~~, he would have destroyed these Samaritans. But he came to save. He ~~not~~ soon angry. He bears patiently ~~osition~~ to himself, and you should ~~r~~ opposition to him. You should ~~ch~~ his spirit; temper your zeal like ~~; seek~~ to do good to those who injure ~~i~~ and him; and be mild, kind, patient, ~~l~~ forgiving.

57—60. See Matt. viii. 19—22.

58. *Bid them farewell.* To take leave, ~~arm~~ them of the design, and set things home in order. Jesus did not suffer ~~s~~ because he probably saw that the man ~~uld~~ be influenced by a love of his ~~nds~~, or by their persuasions, ~~not~~ to

59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer<sup>3</sup> me first to go and bury my father.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Kin. xix. 20.

return to him. The purpose to be a Christian requires decision. Men should not tamper with the world. They should not consult earthly friends about it. They should not even allow worldly friends to give them advice whether to be Christians or not. God is to be obeyed rather than man, and they should come forth boldly, and resolve at once to give themselves to Jesus.

62. *No man having put his hand, &c.* To put one's hand to a plough is a proverbial expression, to signify undertaking any business. In order that a ploughman may accomplish his work, it is necessary to look onward, to be intent on his employment, not to be looking back with regret that he undertook it. So in religion. He that enters on it must do it with his whole heart. He must give up the world. He that comes still loving the world, still looking with regret on its pleasures, its wealth, and its honours, that has not wholly forsaken them as his portion, cannot be a Christian, and is not fit for the kingdom of God. How searching is this test to those who profess to be Christians! And how solemn the duty of all men to renounce earthly objects, and to be not only almost, but altogether, followers of the Son of God! It is perilous to tamper with the world, to look at its pleasures, or to seek its society. He that would enter heaven must come with a heart full of love to God, giving all into his hands, and prepared always to give up all his property, his health, his friends,



CHAPTER X.

*Jesus sends out seventy disciples to preach, 1—16. Their return, 17—20. Divine sovereignty in making the gospel known, 21—24. The lawyer and the parable of the good Samaritan, 25—37. Martha cumbered, and Mary choosing the good part, 38—42.*

**A**FTER<sup>1</sup> these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 1—15. Mark vi. 7—13.

his body, his soul to God, when he demands them, or he cannot be a Christian. Religion is every thing, or nothing. He that is not willing to sacrifice every thing for the cause of God, is really willing to sacrifice nothing.

CHAPTER X.

1. *After these things.* After the appointment of the twelve apostles, and the transactions recorded in the previous chapters. ¶ *Other seventy.* Seventy others besides the apostles. They were appointed for a different purpose from the apostles. The apostles were to be with him, to hear his instructions, to be witnesses of his miracles, his sufferings, his death, his resurrection and ascension, that they might then go and proclaim all these things to the world. The seventy were sent out to preach immediately, and chiefly where Jesus himself was about to come. They were appointed for a temporary object. They were to go into the villages and towns and prepare the way for his coming. The number seventy was a favourite number among the Jews. Thus the family of Jacob that came into Egypt consisted of seventy. Gen. xlv. 27. The number of elders that Moses appointed to aid him was the same. Num. xi. 16, 25. The number which composed the great sanhedrim, or council of the nation, was the same. It is not improbable that our Saviour appointed this number with reference to the fact that it so often occurred among the Jews, or after the example of Moses, who appointed seventy to aid him in his work. But it is evident that the office was

place, whither he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them,<sup>2</sup> The harvest truly is great, but the<sup>3</sup> labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 Carry<sup>4</sup> neither purse, nor

<sup>2</sup> Matt. ix. 37. John iv. 35. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 2  
<sup>1</sup> Tim. v. 17. <sup>4</sup> Ch. ix. 3—5.

temporary, that it had a specific design, and of course, that it would be improper to attempt to find now a continuation of it, or a parallel to it in the Christian ministry. ¶ *Two and two.* There was much wisdom in sending them in this manner. It was done, doubtless, that they might aid one another by mutual counsel; that they might sustain and comfort one another in their persecutions and trials. Our Lord in this, showed the propriety of having a religious friend, who would be a confidant and help. Every Christian, and especially every Christian minister, needs such a friend; and should seek some one to whom he can unbosom himself, and with whom he can mingle his feelings and prayers.

2. See Matt. ix. 36, 37.

3. See Matt. x. 16.

4. *Purse—scrip—shoes.* See Matt. x.

10. ¶ *Salute no man by the way.* Salutations among the Orientals did not consist, as among us, of a slight bow, or extension of the hand, but was performed by many embraces, and inclinations, and even prostrations of the body on the ground. All this required much time; and as the business on which the seventy were sent was urgent, they were required not to delay their journey by long and formal salutations of the persons whom they met. ¶ If two Arabs of equal rank meet each other, they extend to each other the right hand, and having clasped, they elevate them as if to kiss them. Each one then draws back his hand and kisses it instead of his friend's, and then places it upon his forehead. The parties then continue the salutation by kissing each other's beard. They give thanks to God that they are

scrip, nor shoes: and <sup>1</sup> salute no man by the way.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.

6 And if the son <sup>2</sup> of peace be here, your peace shall rest <sup>3</sup> upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for <sup>4</sup> the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat <sup>6</sup> such things as are set before you:

9 And heal the sick that are herein, and say unto them, The <sup>7</sup> kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 Even <sup>8</sup> the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxiv. 33, 56. <sup>2</sup> Kin. iv. 29. Prov. iv. 25. <sup>3</sup> Isa. ix. 6. <sup>4</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 16. <sup>5</sup> Jas. ii. 18. <sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 4-14. <sup>7</sup> 1 Tim. v. 18. <sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. v. 13. <sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. x. 27. <sup>10</sup> Matt. iii. 2. <sup>11</sup> Ch. ix. 6.

once more permitted to see their friend, they pray to the Almighty in his behalf. Sometimes they repeat not less than ten times the ceremony of grasping hands and kissing." The salutation of friends, therefore, was a ceremony which consumed much time; and it was on this account that our Lord, on this occasion, forbade them to delay their journey to greet others. A similar direction is found in 2 Kin. iv. 29.

5. See Matt. x. 13.

6. *The son of peace.* That is, if the house or family be worthy or be disposed to receive you in peace and kindness. See Matt. x. 13. *The son of peace* means

the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

13 Woe <sup>9</sup> unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for <sup>10</sup> if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which <sup>11</sup> art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust <sup>12</sup> down to hell.

16 He <sup>13</sup> that heareth you heareth me; and he <sup>14</sup> that despiseth you despiseth me; and <sup>15</sup> he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

17 ¶ And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan <sup>16</sup> as lightning fall from heaven.

<sup>9</sup> Matt. xi. 21-24. <sup>10</sup> Ezek. iii. 6. <sup>11</sup> Isa. xiv. 13-15. Jer. li. 53. Am. ix. 2, 3. <sup>12</sup> Ezek. xxvi. 20; xxxi. 18. <sup>13</sup> John xiii. 20. <sup>14</sup> Acts v. 4. <sup>15</sup> John v. 23. <sup>16</sup> Rev. xii. 8, 9.

one disposed to peace, or peaceful and kind in his disposition. Compare Matt. i. 1.

7. See Matt. x. 11.

8-12. See Matt. x. 14, 15.

13-15. See Matt. xi. 21-24

16. See Matt. x. 40.

17. *The devils are subject unto us.* The devils obey us. We have been able to cast them out. ¶ *Through thy name.* When commanded in thy name to come out of those who are possessed.

18. *I beheld Satan, &c.* Satan here denotes evidently the prince of the devils who had been cast out by the seventy disciples, for the discourse was respecting

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents<sup>1</sup> and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written<sup>2</sup> in heaven.

21 ¶ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes:

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi. 18. Acts xxviii. 5. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xxxii. 32. Psa. lxi. 28. Isa. iv. 3. Dan. xii. 1. Phil. iv. 3. Heb. xii. 23. Rev. xiii. 8; xx. 12; xxi. 27.

their power over evil spirits. *Lightning* is an image of rapidity or quickness. I saw Satan fall quickly, or rapidly, as quick as lightning. The phrase, *from heaven*, is to be referred to the lightning, and does not mean that he saw Satan fall from heaven, but that he fell as quick as lightning from heaven or from the clouds. The whole expression then may mean, I saw, at your command, devils immediately depart, as quick as the flash of lightning. I gave you this power; I saw it put forth; and I gave also the power to tread on serpents, &c.

19. *To tread on serpents.* Preservation from danger. If you tread on a poisonous reptile that would otherwise injure you, I will keep you from danger. If you go among bitter and malignant enemies that would seek your life, I will preserve you. ¶ *Scorpions.* The scorpion is an animal with eight feet, eight eyes, and a long jointed tail, ending in a pointed weapon or sting. It is found in tropical climates, and seldom exceeds four inches in length. Its sting is extremely poisonous, and it is sometimes fatal to life. In scripture it is the emblem of malicious and crafty men. When rolled up, it has some resemblance to an egg. Ezek. ii. 6. Luke xi. 12. ¶ *The enemy.* Satan. The meaning of this verse is, that Jesus would preserve them from the power

even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 All<sup>3</sup> things<sup>4</sup> are delivered to me of my Father: and no<sup>5</sup> man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal him.

23 ¶ And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:

24 For I tell you, that<sup>6</sup> many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear

<sup>3</sup> Many ancient copies add, *And turning to his disciples, he said.* <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18. John iii. 35. <sup>5</sup> John vi. 44, 46. <sup>6</sup> 1 Pet. i. 10.

of Satan and all his emissaries, from all wicked and crafty men, and this shows that he had divine power. He that can control Satan and his hosts, that can be present to guard from all their machinations, see all their plans, and destroy all their designs, must be clothed with no less than almighty power.

20. *Rather rejoice, &c.* Though it was an honour to work miracles, though it is an honour to be endowed with talents, and influence, and learning, yet it is a subject of chief joy that we are numbered among the people of God, and have a title to everlasting life. ¶ *Names are written in heaven.* The names of citizens of a city or state were accustomed to be written in a book or register, from which they were blotted out when they became unworthy, or forfeited the favour of their country. Compare Exod. xxxii. 32. Deut. ix. 14. Psa. lxi. 28. Rev. iii. 5. That their names were written in heaven, means that they were citizens of heaven, that they were friends of God, and approved by him, and would be permitted to dwell with him. This was of far more value than all earthly honour, power, or wealth; and in this, men should rejoice more than in eminent endowments of influence, learning, talents, or possessions.

21, 22. See Matt. xi. 25—27.

23, 24. See Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

25 ¶ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy

strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jeru-

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xix. 18. <sup>2</sup> Lev. xviii. 5. Neh. ix. 22. Ezek. xx. 11, 21. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 15. Job xxxii. 2. Rom. iv. 2. Gal. iii. 11. Jas. ii. 24. <sup>4</sup> Matt. v. 43, 44.

25. *A certain lawyer.* One who professed to be well skilled in the laws of Moses, and whose business it was to explain them. ¶ *Stood up.* Rose, appeared to address him. ¶ *Tempted him.* Feigned a desire to be instructed, but did it to perplex him, or to lead him, if possible, to contradict some of the maxims of the law. ¶ *Inherit eternal life.* Be saved. This was the common inquiry among the Jews. They had said that man must keep the commandments—the written and oral law.

26. *What is written, &c.* Jesus referred him to the law as a safe rule, and asked him what was said there. The lawyer was doubtless endeavouring to justify himself by obeying the law. He trusted to his own works. To bring him off from that ground, to make him feel that it was an unsafe foundation, Jesus showed him what the law required, and thus would have convinced him that he needed a better righteousness than his own. This is the proper use of the law. By comparing ourselves with that, we see our own defects, and are thus prepared to welcome a better righteousness than our own, that of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the law becomes a school-master to lead us to him. Gal. iii. 24.

27, 28. See this subject explained in Matt. xxii. 37—40.

29. *To justify himself.* Desirous to appear blameless, or to vindicate himself, and show that he had kept the law. Jesus wished to lead him to a view of his own unfitness, and his real departure from the law. The man was desirous of showing that he had kept the law; or perhaps he was desirous of justifying himself for ask-

ing the question; of showing that it could not be so easily settled; that a mere reference to the words of the law did not determine it. It was still a question what was meant by *neighbour*. The Pharisees held that the Jews only were to be regarded as neighbours, and that the relation did not extend at all to the Gentiles. The lawyer was probably ready to affirm that he had discharged faithfully his duty to his countrymen, and had thus kept the law, and could justify himself. Every sinner is desirous of justifying himself. He seeks to do it by his own works. For this purpose he perverts the meaning of the law; destroys its spirituality; and brings down the law to his standard rather than attempt to frame his life by its requirements.

30. *Jesus answering.* Jesus answered him in a very different manner from what he expected. By one of the most tender and affecting narratives to be found anywhere, he made the lawyer his own judge in the case, and constrained him to admit what at first he would probably have denied. He compelled him to acknowledge that a Samaritan, of a race most hated of all people by the Jews, had shown the kindness of a neighbour, while a priest and a Levite had denied it to their own countrymen. ¶ *From Jerusalem to Jericho.* Jericho was situated about fifteen miles to the north-east of Jerusalem, and about eight west of the river Jordan. See Notes on Matt. xx. 29. ¶ *Fell among thieves.* Fell among robbers. The word *thieves* means those who merely take property. These were highwaymen, and not merely took the property, but endangered the life. They were

salem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by <sup>1</sup> on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxviii. 11.

robbers. From Jerusalem to Jericho the country was rocky, mountainous, and in some parts sparsely inhabited. It afforded, therefore, among the rocks and fastnesses, a convenient place for highwaymen. This was also a very frequented road. Jericho was a large place, and there was much travelling to Jerusalem. At this time, also, Judea abounded with robbers. Josephus says that at one time Herod the Great dismissed forty thousand men who had been employed in building the temple, a large part of whom became highwaymen. Josephus' Antiquities, 15, 7.

31. *By chance.* Accidentally, or, as it happened. It means that he did not do it with a design to aid the Samaritan. ¶ *A certain priest.* It is said that not less than twelve thousand priests and Levites dwelt at Jericho; and as their business was at Jerusalem, of course, there would be many of them constantly travelling on that road. ¶ *When he saw him.* He saw him lie, but came not near him. *Passed by on the other side.* On the farther side of the way. Did not turn out of his course even to come and see him.

32. *A Levite.* The Levites, as well as the priests, were of the tribe of Levi, and were set apart to the duties of religion. The peculiar duty of the priest was to offer sacrifice at the temple, to present incense, prayers, the morning and evening services of the temple, &c. The office or duty of the Levites was to render assistance to the priests in their services. In the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness, it was their duty to transport the various parts of the tabernacle, and the various sacred utensils. It was their duty to see that the tabernacle and the temple were kept clean: to prepare supplies for the sanctuary, such as oil, in-

he was at the place, came and looked <sup>2</sup> on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan,<sup>3</sup> as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion <sup>4</sup> on him.

34 And went to him, and bound<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Psa. cix. 25. Prov. xxvii. 10. <sup>3</sup> John iv. 9. <sup>4</sup> Exod. ii. 6. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxlvii. 3. Isa. i. 6.

cense, wine, &c. They had the care of the sacred revenues, and, after the time of David, they conducted the sacred music of the temple service. Numb. viii. 5—22. 1 Chron. xxiii. 3—5, 24—32; xxiv. 27—31. ¶ *Came and looked on him.* It is remarked by critics here, that the expression used does not denote, as in the case of the priest, that he accidentally saw him, and took no farther notice of him, but that he came and looked on him more attentively but still did nothing to relieve him.

33. *A certain Samaritan.* See Matt. x. 5. The Samaritans were the most inveterate foes of the Jews. They had no dealings with each other. See Notes on Matt. x. 5. It was this fact which rendered the conduct of this good man so striking, and thus set in such strong contrast the conduct of the priest and the Levite. They would not help their own afflicted and wounded countrymen. He, who could not be expected to aid a Jew, overcame all the usual hostility between the people; saw, in the wounded man, a neighbour, a brother, one who needed aid, and kindly denied himself to show kindness to the stranger.

34. *Pouring in oil and wine.* These were often used in medicine to heal wounds. Probably they were mingled together, and had a highly sanative quality. How strikingly is his conduct contrasted with the priest and Levite! And how particularly, as well as beautifully by this, does our Saviour show what we ought to do to those who are in circumstances of need! He does not merely say in general that he showed him kindness, but he told how it was done. He stopped, came where he was, pitied him, bound up his wounds, set him on his own beast, conducted him to a tavern, passed

up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two <sup>1</sup> pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more,

<sup>1</sup> See Matt. xx. 2.

the night with him, and then secured the kind attentances of the landlord, promising him to pay him for his trouble, and all this without desiring or expecting any reward. If this had been by a Jew, it would have been signal kindness. If it had been by a Gentile, it would also have been great kindness. But it was by a Samaritan, a man of a nation most hateful to the Jews, and therefore it most strikingly shows what we are to do to friends and foes when they are in distress.

35. *Two pence.* About fifteen pence of our money. This may seem a small sum, but we are to remember that that sum was probably ten times as valuable then as now, that is, that it would purchase ten times as much of food, and of the common necessities of life, as the same sum would now. Besides, it is probable that all the man wanted was attention and kindness, and for all these, it was the purpose of the Samaritan to pay when he returned. ¶ *The host.* The innkeeper.

36. *Was neighbour.* Showed the kindness of a neighbour, or evinced the proper feelings of a neighbour. The lawyer had asked him who was his neighbour. Jesus, in this beautiful narrative, showed him who and what a neighbour was, and showed him in a way that disarmed his prejudice, deeply affected him in regard to his own duty, and evinced the beauty of religion. Had he at first told him that a Samaritan might be a neighbour to a Jew and deserve his kindness, he would have been at once revolted at it. But when, by a beautiful and affecting narrative, he brought the man himself to see that it might be, he was constrained to admit it. Here we see the beauty of a parable and its use. It disarmed prejudice, fixed the attention, took the mind

when I come again, I will repay <sup>2</sup> thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy <sup>3</sup> on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 14. Prov. xix. 17. <sup>3</sup> Prov. xiv. 21. Hos. vi. 6. Mic. vi. 8. Matt. xxiii. 23.

gently, yet irresistibly, and prevented the possibility of cavil or objection.

37. *He that showed mercy.* His Jewish prejudice would not permit him to name the Samaritan, but there was no impropriety, even in his view, in saying that the man who showed so much mercy, was really the neighbour to the afflicted, and not he who professed to be his neighbour, but who would do nothing for his welfare. ¶ *Go and do thou likewise.* Show the same kindness to all—to friend and foe, and then you will have evidence that you keep the law, and not till then. Of this man we know nothing further; but from this inimitably beautiful parable, we may learn: 1. That the knowledge of the law is useful to make us acquainted with our own sinfulness and need of a Saviour. 2. That it is not he who professes most kindness that really loves us most, but he who will most deny himself that he may do us good in times of want. 3. That religion requires us to do good to all men, however accidentally we may become acquainted with their calamities. 4. That we should do good to our enemies. Real love to them will lead us to deny ourselves, and to sacrifice our own welfare, that we may help them in times of distress, and alleviate their wants. 5. That he is really our neighbour who does us the most good, who helps us in our necessities, and especially if he does this when there has been a controversy or difference between us and him. 6. We hence see the beauty of religion. Nothing else will induce men to surmount their prejudices, to overcome opposition, and to do good to those who are at enmity with them. True religion teaches us to regard every man as our neighbour; prompts us to do good to all; to forget all national or sectional distinctions, and to aid all those

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha <sup>1</sup> received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat <sup>2</sup> at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered

<sup>1</sup> John xi. 11; xii. 2, 3. <sup>2</sup> Ch. viii. 35. Acts xxii. 3.

who are in circumstances of poverty and want. If religion were valuable for nothing but this, it would be the most lovely and desirable principle on earth; and all, especially in their early years, should seek it. Nothing that a young person can gain will be so valuable as the feeling that regards all the world as one great family, and to learn early to do good to all. 7. The difference between the Jew and the Samaritan was a difference in religion and religious opinion, and from the example of the latter we may learn, that, while men differ in opinions on subjects of religion, and while they are zealous for what they hold to be the truth, still they should treat each other kindly, aid each other in necessity, and show that religion is a principle superior to the love of sect, and that the cord which binds man to man is one that is to be sundered by no difference of opinion, and that Christian kindness is to be marred by no forms of worship, and no bigoted attachment for what we esteem the doctrines of the gospel.

38. *A certain village.* Bethany. See Note, John xi. 1. It was on the eastern declivity of the mount of Olives. ¶ *Received him.* Received him kindly and hospitably. From this it would seem that Martha was properly the mistress of the house. Possibly she was a widow, and her brother Lazarus and younger sister Mary lived with her. And as she had the care of the household, this will also show why she was diligently employed about domestic affairs.

39. *Sat at Jesus' feet.* This was the ancient posture of disciples or learners. They sat at the feet of their teachers; that is, beneath them, in an humble place, Hence Paul is represented as having been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Acts

about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art <sup>3</sup> careful and troubled about many things:

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xxi. 34; Mark iv. 19. 1 Cor. vii. 35.

xxii. 3. When it is said that Mary sat at Jesus' feet, it means that she was a disciple of his, that she listened attentively to his instructions, and was anxious to learn his doctrine.

40. *Martha was cumbered about much serving.* Was much distracted with the cares of the family, and providing suitably to entertain the Saviour. It should be said here, that there is no evidence that Martha had a worldly or covetous disposition. Her anxiety was to provide suitable entertainment for the Lord Jesus. As mistress of the family, this care properly devolved on her; and the only fault which can be charged on her, was too earnest a desire to make such entertainment, when she might have sat with Mary at his feet, and, perhaps, too much haste and fretfulness in speaking to Jesus about Mary. ¶ *Dost thou not care, &c.* This was an improper reproof of our Lord, as if he encouraged Mary in neglecting her duty. Or perhaps Martha supposed that Mary was sitting there to show him the proper expressions of courtesy and kindness, and that Mary would not think it proper to leave him without his direction and permission. She, therefore, hinted to Jesus her busy employment, her need of the aid of her sister, and requested that Jesus would signify his wish that Mary should assist her.

41. *Thou art careful.* Thou art anxious. ¶ *Troubled.* Disturbed, distracted, very solicitous. ¶ *Many things.* The many objects which excite your attention in the family. This was probably designed as a slight reproof, or a tender hint that she was improperly anxious about those things, and that she should, with Mary, rather choose to hear the discourses of heavenly wisdom.

42 But one thing<sup>1</sup> is needful : and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Prayer taught and encouraged, 1—13.*

*The cavil against Jesus as in league with Beelzebub, 14—26. The obedient*

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xviii. 22. Ps. xxvii. 4; lxxiii. 25. Ec. xii. 13. Mark viii. 36. 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

42. *But one thing is needful.* That is religion or piety. This is eminently and peculiarly needful. Other things are of little importance. This should be secured first, and then all other things will be added. See Matt. vi. 33. 1 Tim. iv. 8. ¶ *That good part.* The portion of the gospel, the love of God, and an interest in his kingdom. She has chosen to be a Christian, and to give up her time and affections to God. ¶ *Which shall not be taken away.* God will not take away his grace from his people, neither shall any man pluck them out of his hand. John x. 28, 29.

From this interesting narrative we learn: 1. That the cares of this life are dangerous, even when they seem to be most lawful and commendable. Nothing of a worldly nature could have been more proper than to provide for the Lord Jesus, and supply his wants. Yet even for this, because it too much engrossed Martha's attention, the Lord Jesus gently reproved her. So a care for our families may be the means of our neglecting religion, and losing our souls. 2. It is of more importance to attend to the instructions of the Lord Jesus, than to be engaged in the affairs of the world. The one will abide for ever, the other will be but for a little time. 3. There are times when it is proper to suspend worldly employments, and attend to the affairs of the soul. It was proper for Mary to do this. It would have been proper for Martha to do it also. It is proper for all, on the sabbath, and even at other occasional seasons, seasons of prayer, and for searching the word of God, to suspend worldly concerns, and attend to religion. 4. If attention to religion be omitted at the proper time, it will always be omitted. If Mary had neglected to hear Jesus then, she might never have heard him.

blessed, 27, 28. *The sign refused, 29—32. Spiritual light to be manifested, 33—36. Jesus dines with a Pharisee and warns the company, 37—54.*

AND it came to pass, that, as he was praying<sup>2</sup> in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vi. 12; ix. 18—23. Heb. v. 7.

5. Piety is the chief thing needed. Other things will perish. We shall soon die. All that we can gain we must leave. But the soul will live. There is a judgment seat; there is a heaven; there is a hell. And all that is needful to prepare us to die, and to make us happy for ever, is to be a friend of Jesus, and to listen to his teaching. 6. Piety is the chief ornament in a female. It sweetens every other virtue, adorns every other grace, and gives new loveliness to the tenderness, mildness, and grace of the female character. Nothing is more lovely than a female sitting at the feet of the meek and lowly Jesus, like Mary; nothing more unlovely than entire absorption in the affairs of the world, like Martha. The most lovely female is she who has most of the spirit of Jesus. The least amiable, she who neglects her soul, who is proud, gay, thoughtless, envious, and unlike the meek and lowly Redeemer. At his feet is peace, purity, joy. Every where else an alluring and wicked world steals the affections, and renders us vain, gay, wicked, proud, and unwilling to die.

## CHAPTER XI.

1. *As he was praying.* Luke has taken notice of our Saviour's praying often. Thus, at his baptism, ch. iii. 21; in the wilderness, ch. v. 16; before the appointment of the apostles, he continued all night in prayer, ch. vi. 12; he was alone praying, ch. ix. 18; his transfiguration also took place when he went up to pray, ch. ix. 28, 29. ¶ *Teach us to pray.* Probably they had been struck with the excellency and fervour of his prayers, and recollecting that John had taught his disciples to pray, they asked him also to teach them. We learn, therefore: 1. That the gifts and graces of others should lead us to desire the same.



2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our <sup>1</sup> Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us <sup>2</sup> day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for<sup>3</sup> we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

5 And he said unto them, Which

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 9—13. <sup>2</sup> Or, for the day. <sup>3</sup> Mark xi. 25, 26.

2. That the true method of praying can be learned only from the Lord Jesus. Indeed, we cannot pray acceptably at all, unless God shall teach us how to pray.

3. That it is proper for us to meditate beforehand what we are to ask of God, and to arrange our thoughts, that we may not come inconsiderately into his presence.

2—4. See this passage explained in Matt. vi. 9—13.

4. *For we also forgive, &c.* This is somewhat different from the expression in Matthew, though the sense is the same. The idea is that unless we forgive others, God will not forgive us; and unless we come to him really forgiving all others, we cannot expect pardon. It does not mean, that by forgiving others we deserve forgiveness ourselves, or merit it, but that it is a disposition without which God cannot consistently pardon us. ¶ *Everyone that is indebted to us.* Every one that has injured us. It does not refer to pecuniary transactions; but to offences similar to those which we have committed against God, and for which we ask forgiveness. Besides the variations in the expressions in this prayer, Luke has omitted the doxology or close, altogether; and this shows that Jesus did not intend that we should always use just this form, but that it was a general direction how to pray, or rather that we were to pray for these things, though not always using the same words.

5—7. *And he said unto them, &c.* Jesus proceeds to show that, in order to obtain the blessing, it was necessary to

of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine <sup>4</sup> in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because

<sup>4</sup> Or, out of his way.

persevere in asking for it. For this purpose he introduces this case of a friend's asking bread of another for one who had come to him unexpectedly. His design is solely to show the necessity of being importunate or persevering in prayer to God. ¶ *At midnight.* A time when it would be most inconvenient for his friend to help him. An hour when he would naturally be in bed, and his house shut. ¶ *Three loaves.* There is nothing particularly denoted by the number three in this place. Jesus often threw in such particulars merely to fill up the story, or to preserve the consistency of it. ¶ *My children are with me in bed.* This does not mean that they were in the same bed with him, but that they were all in bed, the house was still, the door was shut, and it was troublesome for him to rise at that time of night to accommodate him. This is not to be applied to God as if it were troublesome to him to be sought unto, or as if he would ever reply to a sinner in that manner. But all that is to be applied to God in this parable is simply that it is proper to persevere in prayer. As a man often gives because the request is repeated, and as one is not discouraged because the favour that he asks of his neighbour is delayed, so God often gives after long and importunate requests.

8. *I say unto you.* The Latin Vulgate here adds, "if he shall continue knocking." Though this is not in the Greek, yet it is indispensable that it should be understood in order to the sense. Knocking once would not denote importunity, but it was

he is his friend, yet because of his importunity<sup>1</sup> he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask,<sup>2</sup> and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a<sup>3</sup> stone? or if *he* ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer<sup>4</sup> him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall

your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

14 ¶ And he was<sup>5</sup> casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through<sup>6</sup> Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

16 And others, tempting him,<sup>7</sup> sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 But he, knowing<sup>8</sup> their thoughts, said unto them, Every<sup>9</sup> kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xviii. 1—8. <sup>2</sup> Matt. vii. 7; xxi. 22. John xv. 7. Jas. i. 6. <sup>3</sup> John iii. 22. <sup>4</sup> Isa. xlix. 14—16. <sup>5</sup> Give.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. ix. 32; xii. 22—30. <sup>7</sup> Beelzebub, so ver. 18, 19. <sup>8</sup> Matt. xii. 38; xvi. 1. <sup>9</sup> John ii. 25. <sup>10</sup> Matt. xii. 25. Mark iii. 24.

because he continued knocking. ¶ *His importunity*. His troublesome perseverance; his continuing to disturb the man, and refusing to take any denial. The word *importunity* denotes perseverance in an object, without any regard to time, place, or circumstances, an improper perseverance. By this the man was influenced. Rather than be disturbed, he would rise and give the applicant what he asked. This is to be applied to God in no other sense than that he often hears prayers and grants blessings, even long after they appear to be unanswered or withheld. He does not promise to give blessings at once. He promises only that he will do it, or will answer prayer. But he often causes his people long to wait. He tries their faith. He leaves them to persevere for months or years, until they feel entirely their dependence on him, until they see that they can obtain the blessing in no other way, and until they are prepared for it. Often they are not prepared to receive it when they ask it at first. They may be proud, or have no just sense of their dependence, or they would not value the blessing, or it may at

that time not be best for them to obtain it. But let no one despair. If the thing is for our good, and if it is proper that it should be granted, God will give it. Let us first ask aright, let us see that our minds are in a proper state, let us feel our need of it, let us inquire whether God has promised such a blessing, and then let us persevere until God gives it. Again: men, when they ask any thing of God, often give over seeking. They go once, and if it is not granted they are discouraged. It is not so when we ask any thing of men. Then we persevere, we take no denial, we go again, and press the matter till we obtain it. So we should act in respect to God. We should go again and again, until the prayer is heard and God grants what we ask of him.

9—12. See this explained in Matt. vii 7—11.

12. *A scorpion*? See Note, Luke x. 19. The body of the white scorpion has a considerable resemblance in size and appearance to an egg; and the figure is used, therefore, with great beauty by our Lord.

14—23. See this passage explained in Matt. xii. 22—30.

cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with the finger <sup>1</sup> of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22 But when a stronger <sup>2</sup> than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to *him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse <sup>3</sup> than the first.

27 ¶ And it came to pass, as he

<sup>1</sup> Exod. viii. 19. <sup>2</sup> Isa. liii. 12. Col. ii. 15. <sup>3</sup> John v. 14. Heb. vi. 4; x. 26, 27. <sup>2</sup> Pet. ii. 20, 21.

24—26. See Matt. xii. 43—45.

27, 28. *A certain woman.* One of the crowd. ¶ *Blessed is the womb*, &c. She thought that the mother of such a person must be peculiarly happy, in having such a son. ¶ *Yea.* Jesus admits that she was happy; that it was an honour to be his mother. ¶ *Rather blessed*, &c. but he says that the chief happiness, the highest honour, was to obey the word of

spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed <sup>4</sup> is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed <sup>5</sup> are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

29 ¶ And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and <sup>6</sup> there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as Jonas <sup>7</sup> was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

31 The queen <sup>8</sup> of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for <sup>9</sup> they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

33 No <sup>10</sup> man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel,

<sup>4</sup> Ch. i. 28, 48. <sup>5</sup> Ch. viii. 21. <sup>6</sup> Ps. cxix. 1, 2. Matt. vii. 21. <sup>7</sup> Jas. i. 25. <sup>8</sup> Matt. xii. 40—42. Mark viii. 12. <sup>9</sup> John i. 17; ii. 18. <sup>10</sup> 1 Kin. x. 1—13. <sup>10</sup> John iii. 5, 10. <sup>10</sup> Ch. viii. 16. Matt. v. 15, 16. Mark iv. 21.

God, or to be his child. Compared with this, all earthly distinctions and honours are as nothing. Man's greatest dignity is in keeping the holy commandments of God, and being prepared for heaven.

29—32. See Matt. xii. 38—42.

33—36. These verses are found in Matthew, but in a different connexion. See Matt. v. 16; vi. 22, 23.

but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

34 The<sup>1</sup> light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil,<sup>2</sup> thy body also is full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

36 If thy whole body therefore be full of light,<sup>3</sup> having no part

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 22, 23. <sup>2</sup> Prov. xxviii. 22. Mark vii. 22. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxix. 105. Prov. vi. 23. Isa. viii. 20. <sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 6.

37. *And as he spake.* While he was addressing the people, and particularly while he was reproving that generation, and declaring its crimes. ¶ *A certain Pharisee.* The Pharisee was one among others that were reproved by the discourse of Jesus. He therefore interrupted Christ, and invited him to go home with him. There is little doubt that this was for the purpose of drawing him away from the people; that he did it with a malignant intention, perhaps with a design to confute Jesus in private, or to reprove him for thus condemning the whole nation as he did. He might have seen that those who attacked Jesus publicly were commonly unsuccessful, and he desired probably to encounter him more privately. ¶ *Besought him.* Asked him. ¶ *To dine with him.* The Jews, as well as the Greeks and Romans, had but two principal meals. The first was a slight repast, and was taken about ten or eleven o'clock of our time, and consisted chiefly of fruit, milk, cheese, &c. The second meal was partaken of about three o'clock, *p. m.*, and was their principal meal. The first is the one here intended. ¶ *He went in.* Though he knew the evil design of the Pharisee, yet he did not decline the invitation. He knew that it might afford him an opportunity to do good. These two things are to be observed in regard to our Saviour's conduct in such matters: 1. That he did not decline an invitation to dine with a man, simply because he was a Pharisee, or because he was a wicked man. Hence he was charged with being

dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when<sup>4</sup> the bright shining<sup>5</sup> of a candle doth give thee light.

37 ¶ And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him:<sup>6</sup> and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And<sup>7</sup> when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now<sup>8</sup> do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter

<sup>4</sup> A candle by its bright shining. <sup>5</sup> Prov. iv. 18; xx. 27. <sup>6</sup> Ch. vii. 36; xiv. 1. <sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 19-23. <sup>8</sup> Mark vii. 3. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xxiii. 25.

glutinous, and a friend of publicans and sinners. 2. He seized upon all such occasions to do good. He never shrank from declaring the truth, and availing himself of means of spreading the gospel. If Christians and Christian ministers would follow the example of the Saviour always, they would avoid all scandal, and might do even in such places, a vast amount of good. ¶ *Sat down.* Reclined at the table. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6.

38. *Saw it.* Saw that he sat immediately down without washing. ¶ *Marvelled.* Wondered. Was amazed. It was so unusual, and, in his view, so improper. ¶ *Had not first washed.* He wondered particularly, as he had been among a mixed multitude, and they esteemed the touch of such persons polluting. They never ate, therefore, without such washing. The origin of the custom of washing with so much formality before they partook of their meals, was that they did not use as we do knives and forks, but used their hands only. Hence, as their hands would be often in a dish on the table, it was esteemed proper that they should be washed clean before eating. Nor was there impropriety in the thing itself, but the Pharisees made it a matter of ceremony; they placed no small part of their religion in such ceremonies; and it was right, therefore, that our Lord should take occasion to reprove them for it. Compare Mark vii. 4.

39. See Matt. xxiii. 25. *Ravens.* Robbery, plunder. Here it means that the cup and platter were filled with what

ter; but <sup>1</sup> your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?

41 But <sup>2</sup> rather give alms <sup>3</sup> of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

42 But woe <sup>4</sup> unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 15. Gen. vi. 5. Prov. xxvi. 25. Tit. i. 15. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xli. 33. Isa. lviii. 7. <sup>3</sup> Or, as ye are able. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiii. 23, 27.

had been unjustly taken from others. That is, they lived by their wickedness; their food was procured by dishonesty and extortion. This was a most terrible charge; and as it was applied, among others, to the man who had invited the Saviour to dine with him, it shows that nothing would prevent his dealing faithfully with the souls of men. Even in the Pharisee's own house, and when expressly invited to partake of his hospitality, he loved his soul so much, that he faithfully warned him of his crimes.

40. *Ye fools.* How unwise and wicked is your conduct! The word denotes not only want of wisdom, but also wickedness. Compare Psa. xiv. 1. Prov. xiii. 19; xiv. 9. Your conduct is not merely foolish, but it is a cloak for sin, designed to countenance wickedness. ¶ *Did not he, &c.* Did not God, who made the body, make also the soul? You Pharisees take great pains to cleanse the body, under a pretence of pleasing God. Did he not also make the mind, and is it not of as much importance that that should be pure, as that the body should?

41. *Alms.* Charity. Benefactions to the poor. ¶ *Such things as ye have.* Your property; though it has been gained unjustly; though you have lived by rapine, and have amassed wealth in an improper manner, yet since you have it, it is your duty to make the best of it, and do good. By giving to the poor, you may show your repentance of your crimes in amassing money in this manner. You may show that you disapprove of your former course of life, and are disposed henceforward to live honestly. If this be the

judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for <sup>5</sup> ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as <sup>6</sup> graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxiii. 6. Mark xii. 38. <sup>6</sup> Psa. v. 3.

meaning of this passage, then it shows what is the duty of those who have by unjust gains become wealthy, and who then are converted to God. It may not be possible for them in every case to make exact restitution to those whom they have injured. Thousands of instances they may have forgotten. Many persons whom they injured may have died. But still they may show, by giving to others, that they do not think their gains acquired honestly, and that they truly repent. They may devote their property to God, distribute it to the poor, or give it to send the gospel to the heathen world. Thus may they show that they disapprove of their former conduct; and thus may be seen one great principle of God's government, that good finally comes out of evil. ¶ *And behold, &c.* Doing this will show that you are a true penitent, and the remainder of your property you will enjoy with a feeling that you have done your duty, and no longer be smitten with the consciousness of hoarding unjust gains. The object of the Saviour here seems to have been to bring the Pharisee to repentance. Repentance consists in sorrow for sin, and in forsaking it. This Jesus endeavoured to produce by showing 1. The evil and hypocrisy of the Pharisee's conduct. And, 2. By exhorting him to forsake his sins, and to show this by doing good. Thus doing, he would evince that the mind as well as the body was clean; the inside as well as the outside.

42. See Matt. xxiii. 23. ¶ *Rue.* This is a small garden plant, and is used as a medicine. It has a rosy flower, a bitter, penetrating taste, and a strong smell.

43, 44. See Matt. xxiii. 6, 27.

45 ¶ Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens <sup>1</sup> with one of your fingers.

47 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow <sup>2</sup> the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, <sup>3</sup> and ye build their sepulchres.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of

them they shall slay and persecute:

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required <sup>4</sup> of this generation;

51 From the blood of Abel <sup>5</sup> unto the blood of Zacharias, <sup>6</sup> which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.<sup>7</sup>

52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: <sup>8</sup> ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye <sup>9</sup> hindered.

53 And as he said these things

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lviii. 6. <sup>2</sup> Ezek. xviii. 19. <sup>3</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. Matt. xxi. 35—38. Heb. xi. 35, 37.

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xx. 5. Jer. ii. 26. <sup>5</sup> Gen. iv. 8. <sup>6</sup> 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. <sup>7</sup> Jer. vii. 28. <sup>8</sup> Mal. ii. 7. <sup>9</sup> Or, forbade.

45. *Lawyers.* Men learned in the law; but it is not known in what way the lawyers differed from the scribes, or whether they were Pharisees or Sadducees. ¶ *Thus saying, thou, &c.* He felt that the remarks of Jesus about loving the chief seats, &c., applied to them as well as to the Pharisees. His conscience told him that if they were to blame, he was, and he therefore applied the discourse to himself. ¶ *Reproachest.* Accusost. Dost calumniate, or dost blame us, for we do the same things. Sinners often consider faithfulness as reproach. They know not how to separate these things. Jesus did not reproach or abuse them. He dealt faithfully with them, reprov'd them, told them the unvarnished truth. Such faithfulness is rare; but when it is used we must expect that men will flinch, perhaps be enraged; and though their consciences tell them they are guilty, still they will consider it as abuse.

46. See Matt. xxiii. 4.

47—51. See Matt. xxiii. 29—36.

49. *The wisdom of God.* By the wisdom of God, here, is undoubtedly meant the Saviour himself. What he immediately says is not written in the Old Testament. Jesus is called the Word of God, John i. 1, because he is the medium by which God speaks, or makes his will

known. He is called the Wisdom of God, because by him God makes his wisdom known in creation, Col. i. 13—18, and in redemption. God shows himself wise by what Jesus says and does to redeem men. The same name is given to him in 1 Cor. i. 30. Many have also thought that the Messiah was referred to in Proverbs viii., under the name of wisdom. ¶ *I will send, &c.* See Matt. x. 16. Luke x. 3. ¶ *Shall slay, &c.* Compare 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16. John xvi. 2. Acts vii. 52, 59. xii. 2; xxii. 19. James v. 10. 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

52. *Woe unto you, lawyers.* See Note, Matt. xxiii. 13. ¶ *The key of knowledge.* A key is made to open a lock or door. By falsely interpreting the Old Testament, the lawyers had taken away the true key of understanding it. They had hindered the people from understanding it aright. "You endeavour to prevent the people also from understanding the scriptures respecting the Messiah; and those who were coming to me ye hindered." If there be any sin of peculiar magnitude, it is that of keeping the people in ignorance. And few men are so guilty as they who by false instructions prevent them from coming to a knowledge of the truth, and embracing it as it is in Jesus.

53. *To urge him vehemently.* To press  
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unto them, the scribes and Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke<sup>1</sup> him to speak of many things:

54 Laying wait for him, and<sup>2</sup> seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xii. 13.

upon him violently. They were enraged against him. They therefore pressed upon him; asked him many questions; sought to entrap him, that they might accuse him. ¶ *Provoke him*, &c. This means that they put many questions to him about various matters, without giving him proper time to answer. They proposed questions as fast as possible, and about as many things as possible, that they might get him, in the hurry, to say something that would be wrong, that they might thus accuse him. This was a remarkable instance of their cunning, malignity, and unfairness.

54. *Laying wait for him*. Or, rather, laying snares for him. It means that they endeavoured to entangle him in his talk; that they did as men do who catch birds, who lay snares, and deceive them, and take them unawares. ¶ *That they might accuse him*. Before the sanhedrim, or great council of the nation, and thus secure his being put to death.

From this we may learn, 1. That faithful reproofs must be expected to excite opposition and hatred. Though the conscience may be roused, and may testify against the man that is reproofed, yet that does not prevent his hating the reproof and the reproofer. 2. We see here the manner in which wicked men will endeavour to escape the reproofs of conscience. Instead of repenting, they seek vengeance, and resolve to put the reproofer to shame or to death. 3. We see the exceeding malignity which men may have against the Lord Jesus. Well was it said that he was set for the fall of many in Israel, that thereby the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed! Men, now, are not by nature less opposed to Jesus than they were then. 4. We see the wisdom, purity, and firmness of the Saviour. To their souls he had been faithful. He had

## CHAPTER XII.

*Hypocrisy and fear to be avoided*, 1—12. *Against covetousness; and the rich fool*, 13—21. *Against anxious care*, 22—34. *The watchful servant*, 35—48. *Persecution to be expected*, 49—53. *Times to be observed* 54—57: *and improved*, 58, 59.

IN<sup>3</sup> the mean time, when there were gathered together an innu-

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xvi. 6—12. Mark viii. 15—21.

boldly reproofed them for their sins. They sought his life. Multitudes of the artful and learned gathered around him to endeavour to draw out something of which they might accuse him. Yet in vain. Not a word fell from his lips of which they could accuse him. Every thing that he said was calm, mild, peaceful, wise, and lovely. Even his cunning and bitter adversaries were always confounded, and retired in shame and confusion. Here, surely, must have been something more than man. None but God manifest in the flesh could have known all their designs, seen all their wickedness and their wiles, and escaped the cunning stratagems that were laid to confound and entangle him in his conversation. 5. The same infinitely wise Saviour can still meet and confound all his own enemies and those of his people, and deliver all his followers, as he did himself, from all the snares laid by a wicked world to lead them to sin and death.

## CHAPTER XII.

1. *In the mean time*. While he was discoursing with the scribes and Pharisees, as recorded in the last chapter. ¶ *An innumerable multitude*. The original word is myriads, or ten thousands. It is used here to signify that there was a great crowd or collection of people, who were anxious to hear him. Multitudes of people were attracted to our Saviour's ministry; and it is worthy of remark that he never had more to hear him than when he was most faithful and severe in his reproofs of sinners. Men's consciences are on the side of the faithful reproofer of their sins; and though they deeply feel the reproof, yet they will often still respect and hear him that reproofs. ¶ *To his disciples first of all*. This does not mean that his disciples were,

merable multitude of people, inasmuch that they trode one upon another,<sup>1</sup> he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees,<sup>2</sup> which is hypocrisy.

2 For<sup>3</sup> there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.

4 And I say unto you my<sup>4</sup> friends,<sup>5</sup> Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for

two farthings,<sup>6</sup> and not one of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

8 Also I say unto you,<sup>7</sup> Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess<sup>8</sup> before the angels of God:

9 But he that denieth<sup>9</sup> me before men shall be denied before the angels<sup>10</sup> of God.

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not<sup>11</sup> be forgiven.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take<sup>12</sup> ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

12 For the Holy Ghost shall

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. vii. 17. <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. Jas. iii. 13—18. <sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 17. Matt. x. 26. Mark iv. 22. <sup>4</sup> John xv. 14. <sup>5</sup> Isa. ii. 7—13. Matt. x. 23—32.

<sup>6</sup> See Matt. x. 29. <sup>7</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30. Psa. cxix. 46. 2 Tim. ii. 12. Rev. ii. 10. <sup>8</sup> Jude 24. <sup>9</sup> Acts iii. 13, 14. Rev. iii. 8. <sup>10</sup> Matt. xxv. 31. <sup>11</sup> Matt. xlii. 31. 1 John v. 16. <sup>12</sup> Ch. xxi. 14. Matt. x. 19. Mark xlii. 11.

before all others, to avoid hypocrisy; but that this was the first or chief thing of which they were to beware. The meaning is this: 'He said to his disciples, *Above all things, beware,*' &c. ¶ *The leaven.* See Note, Matt. xvi. 6. ¶ *Which is hypocrisy.* See Note, Matt. vii. 6. Hypocrisy is like leaven, or yeast, because, 1. It may exist without being immediately detected. Leaven mixed in flour is not known until it produces its effects. 2. It is insinuating. Leaven will soon pervade the whole mass. So hypocrisy, if undetected and unremoved, will soon pervade all our exercises and feelings. 3. It is swelling. It puffs us up, and fills us with pride and vanity. No man is more proud than the hypocrite; and none is more odious to God. When Jesus cautions the disciples to beware of this, he means that they should be cautious about imbibing

the spirit of Pharisees, and becoming like them. The religion of Jesus is one of sincerity, of humility, without guile or disguise. The humblest man is the best Christian; and he who has the least disguise, is most like his Master.

2—9. *Nothing covered.* See Note, Matt. x. 26—32.

10. See Note, Matt. xii. 32.

11, 12. See Note, Matt. x. 17—20.

12. *One of the company.* One of the multitude. This man had probably had a dispute with his brother, supposing that he had refused to do him justice. Conceiving that Jesus had power over the people, that what he said must be performed, he endeavoured to secure him on his side in the dispute, and gain his point. From the parallel which follows, it would appear that this man had no just claim on the inheritance, but was influenced by



teach<sup>1</sup> you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

13 ¶ And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.<sup>2</sup>

14 And he said unto him, Man,<sup>3</sup> who made me a judge or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness:<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi. 10; xxvi.    <sup>2</sup> Ezek. xxxiii. 31.  
<sup>3</sup> John xviii. 33.    <sup>4</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 7—10.

covetousness. Besides, if he had any just claim, it might have been secured by the laws of the land. ¶ *Speak to my brother.* Command my brother. ¶ *Divide the inheritance.* An inheritance is the property which is left by a father to his children. Among the Jews the older brother had two shares, or twice as much as any other child. Deut. xxi. 17. The remainder was then equally divided among all the children.

14. *Who made me a judge?* It is not my business to settle controversies of this kind. They are to be settled by the magistrate. Jesus came for another purpose; to preach the gospel, and so bring men to a willingness to do right. Civil affairs are to be left to the magistrate. There is no doubt that Jesus could have told him which was right in this case; but then it would have been interfering with the proper office of the magistrates; it might have led him into controversy with the Jews; and it was besides evidently apart from the proper business of his life. We may remark, also, that the appropriate business of the ministers of the gospel is to attend to spiritual concerns. They should have little to do with the temporal matters of the people. If they can persuade men to be reconciled, it is right; but they have no power to take the place of a magistrate and settle contentions in a legal way.

15. *Beware of covetousness.* One of these brothers, no doubt, was guilty of this sin; and our Saviour, as was his custom, took occasion to warn his disciples of its danger. *Covetousness.* An *unlawful* desire of the property of another; also, a desire of gain, and riches, beyond

for a man's life<sup>5</sup> consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

<sup>5</sup> Job ii. 4. Matt. vi. 23.

what is necessary for our wants. It is a violation of the tenth commandment, Exod. xx. 17, and is expressly called idolatry. Col. iii. 5. Compare, also, Eph. v. 3, and Heb. xiii. 5. ¶ *A man's life.* The word *life* is sometimes taken in the sense of happiness or felicity; and some have supposed this to be the meaning here, and that Jesus meant to say that a man's comfort does not depend on affluence, i.e. on more than is necessary for his daily wants. But this meaning does not suit the parable following, which is designed to show that property will not lengthen out a man's life, and therefore is not too ardently to be sought, and is of little value. The word *life*, therefore, is to be taken literally. ¶ *Consisteth not.* Rather dependeth not on his possessions. His possessions will not prolong it. The passage, then, means: Be not anxious about obtaining wealth; for however much you obtain, it will not prolong your life. That depends on the will of God, and it requires a different preparation from wealth, to be ready to meet him. This sentiment he proceeds to illustrate by a beautiful parable.

16. *A parable.* See Note, Matt. xiii. 3. ¶ *Plentifully.* His land was fertile, and produced even beyond his expectations, and beyond what he had provided for.

17. *He thought.* He reasoned, or inquired. He was anxious and perplexed. Riches increase thought and perplexity. Indeed this is almost their only effect, to engross the thoughts and steal the heart away from better things, in order to take care of the useless wealth. ¶ *No room.* Every place was full. ¶ *To bestow.* To place, to hoard, to collect. ¶ *My fruits.*

18 And he said, This will <sup>1</sup> I do : [ will pull down my barns, and build greater ; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, <sup>2</sup> thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, <sup>3</sup> drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou*

<sup>1</sup> Dent. vi. 11, 12 ; viii. 12—14. Jas. iv. 15, 16. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xlix. 18. <sup>3</sup> Ecc. xi. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 12. Jas. v. 5.

Our word *fruits* is not applied to grain. But the Greek word is applied to all the produce of the earth, not only fruit, but also to grain. This is likewise the old meaning of the English word, especially in the plural number.

18. *I will pull down my barns.* The word *barns*, here, properly means granaries, or places exclusively designed for storing wheat, barley, &c. They were commonly made, by the ancients, under ground, where grain could be kept a long time, more safe from thieves and from vermin. If it be asked why he did not let the old ones remain, and build new ones, it may be answered that it would be easier to enlarge those already excavated in the earth than to dig new ones.

19. *Much goods.* Much property. Enough to last a long while, so that there is no need of anxiety or labour. ¶ *Take thine ease.* Be free from care about the future. Have no anxiety about provision for want. ¶ *Eat, drink, and be merry.* This was just the doctrine of the ancient Epicureans and Atheists. And it is, alas ! too often the doctrine of those who are rich. They think that all that is valuable in life is to eat, and drink, and be cheerful, or merry. Hence their chief anxiety is to obtain the luxuries from all the world ; to secure the productions from every clime at any expense ; and to be distinguished for splendid repasts and luxurious living. What a portion is this for an immortal soul ! What folly to think that all that a man lives for is to satisfy his sensual appetites ; to forget that he has an intellect to be cultivated, a heart to be purified, a soul to be saved from eternal death.

20. *Thou fool.* If there is any supreme folly, it is this. As though riches could prolong the life, or avert for a moment the

fool, this night <sup>4</sup> thy <sup>5</sup> soul shall be required of thee : then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided ? <sup>6</sup>

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, <sup>7</sup> and is not rich <sup>8</sup> toward God.

<sup>4</sup> Or, do they require thy soul. <sup>5</sup> Job xx. 20—23 ; xxvii. 8. Psa. lli. 7. Jas. iv. 14. <sup>6</sup> Psa. xxxix. 6 ; xlix. 16, 17. Jer. xvii. 11. <sup>7</sup> Hab. ii. 9. <sup>8</sup> Ver. 33. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Jas. ii. 5.

approach of pain and death. ¶ *This night, &c.* What an awful sentence to a man who, as he thought, had got just ready to live and enjoy himself ! In one single moment all his hopes were blasted, and his soul summoned to the bar of his long-forgotten God. So, many are surprised as suddenly, and as unprepared. They are snatched from their pleasures, and hurried to a world where is no pleasure, and where all their wealth cannot purchase one moment's ease from the gnawings of the worm that never dies. ¶ *Shall be required of thee.* Thou shalt be required to go to God, to die, and to give up your account. ¶ *Then whose, &c.* Whose they may be is of little consequence to the man that lost his soul to gain them. But they are often left to heirs that dissipate them much sooner than the father procured them, and thus they secure their ruin as well as his own. See Psa. xvii. 14.

21. *So is he.* This is the portion, or the doom, &c. ¶ *Layeth up treasure for himself.* Acquires riches for his own use ; for himself. This is the characteristic of the covetous man. It is all for himself. His plans terminate here. He lives only for himself, and acts only with regard to his own interest. ¶ *Rich towards God.* Has no inheritance in the kingdom of God, no riches laid up in heaven. His affections are all on the world, and he has none for God.

From this instructive parable we learn : 1. That wicked men are often signally prospered ; their ground brings forth plentifully. God gives them their desire, but sends leanness into their souls. 2. That riches bring with them always an increasing load of cares and anxieties. 3. That they steal away the affections from God ;

22 ¶ And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take <sup>1</sup> no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: <sup>2</sup> for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 25—27. <sup>2</sup> Job xxxviii. 41. Psa. cxlviii. 9.

they are sly, insinuating, and dangerous to the soul. 4. That the anxiety of a covetous man is not what good he may do with his wealth, but where he may heard it, and keep it secure from doing any good. 5. That riches cannot secure their haughty owners from the grave. Death will come upon them suddenly, unexpectedly, awfully. In the very midst of the brightest anticipations, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, it may come, and all their wealth cannot alleviate one pang, or drive away one fear, or prolong one moment of their life. 6. That the man who is trusting to his riches in this manner, is a fool in the sight of God. Soon, also, he will be a fool in his own sight, and will go to hell with the consciousness that his life has been one of eminent folly. 7. That the path of true wisdom is to seek first the kingdom of God, and to be ready to die; and then it matters little what is our portion here, or how suddenly or soon we are called away to meet our Judge. If our affections are not fixed on our riches, we

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, <sup>3</sup> neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 ¶ But <sup>4</sup> rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all <sup>5</sup> these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; <sup>6</sup> for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>7</sup>

33 Sell <sup>8</sup> that ye have, and give alms: provide yourselves bags

<sup>3</sup> Or, live not in careful suspense. <sup>4</sup> Matt. vi. 33. <sup>5</sup> Psa. xxiv. 10. <sup>6</sup> Isa. xxxiii. 16. Rom. viii. 31. 32. <sup>7</sup> Isa. xl. 11. John x. 27. 28. <sup>8</sup> Matt. xiv. 34. John xviii. 36. Heb. xii. 28. Jas. ii. 5. <sup>2</sup> Pet. i. 11. <sup>3</sup> Rev. i. 6; xiii. 2. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xix. 21. Acts ii. 45; iv. 34.

shall leave them without regret. If our treasures are laid up in heaven, death will be but going home, and happy will be that moment when we are called to our rest.

22—31. See this passage explained in Matt. vi. 25—33.

32. *Little flock.* Our Saviour often represents himself as a shepherd, and his followers as a flock, or as sheep. The figure was beautiful. In Judea it was a common employment to attend flocks. The shepherd was with them, defended them, provided for them, led them to green pastures and beside still waters. In all these things, Jesus was and is eminently the Good Shepherd. His flock was small. Few really followed him, compared with the multitude who refused to love him. But though small in number, they were not to fear. God was their friend. He would provide for them. It was his purpose to give them the kingdom, and they had nothing to fear. See Matt. vi. 19—21.

33. *Sell that ye have.* Sell your pro-

which wax not old, a treasure <sup>1</sup> in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 Let <sup>2</sup> your loins be girded about, and your lights <sup>3</sup> burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding;

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 19. <sup>2</sup> Eph. vi. 1. Pet. i. 13. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxv. 1, 13.

erty. Exchange it for that which ye use in distributing charity. This was the condition of their being disciples. Their property they gave up; they forsook it, or they put it into common stock, for the sake of giving alms to the poor. Acts ii. 44; iv. 32. John xii. 6. Acts 1. 2. ¶ *Bags which was not old.* The old bags, here, means purses, or the bags attached to their girdles, in which they carried their money. See Notes, Matt. 38. By bags which wax not old, Jesus means that we should lay up treasure in heaven; that our aim should be to be prepared to enter there, where all our wants will be for ever provided for. Purses, here, grow old and useless. Wealth takes of itself wings. Riches are easily scattered, or we must soon leave them; but that wealth which is in heaven abides for ever. It never is corrupted; never flies away; never is to be left. ¶ *Was.* This word is from an old Saxon word, and in the Bible means to grow.

35. *Let your loins, &c.* This alludes to the ancient manner of dress. They wore a long flowing robe as their outer garment. See Notes, Matt. v. 38—41. When they laboured, or walked, or ran, it was necessary to gird or tie this up by a sash or girdle about the body, that it might not impede their progress. Hence, to gird up the loins means to be ready, be active, be diligent. Compare 2 Kin. iv. 9; ix. 1. Jer. i. 17. Acts xii. 8. ¶ *Your lights burning.* This expresses the same meaning. Be ready at all times to leave the world and enter into rest, when your Lord shall call you. Let every obstacle be out of the way; every earthly care be removed, and be prepared to follow him

that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed <sup>4</sup> are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxiv. 46—51.

into his rest. Servants were expected to be ready for the coming of their Lord. If in the night, they were expected to keep their lights trimmed and burning. This expression refers to the duty of servants, when their master was away, and when he would return from a wedding, as they knew not the hour, they were to be continually ready. Compare Notes on Matt. xxv. So we, as we know not the hour when God shall call us, should be always ready to die.

36. See Notes on Matt. xxv. 1—13.

37. *Shall gird himself.* Shall take the place of the servant himself. Servants who waited on the table were girded in the manner described above. ¶ *Shall make them sit, &c.* Shall place them at his table, and feast them. This evidently means that if we are faithful to Christ, and are ready to meet him when he returns, he will receive us into heaven, will admit us to all its blessings, and make us happy there, as if he should serve us and minister to our wants. It will be as if a master, instead of sitting down at the table himself, should place his faithful servants there, and be himself the servant. This shows the exceeding kindness and condescension of our Lord. For us, poor and guilty sinners, he denied himself, took the form of a servant, Phil. ii. 7, and ministered to our wants. In our nature he has wrought out salvation; and has done it in one of the humblest conditions of the children of men. How should our bosoms burn with gratitude to him, and how should we be willing to serve one another! See Notes on John xiii. 1—17.

38—46. See Matt. xxiv. 42—51. ¶ *Second watch.* See Matt. xiv. 25.

second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief <sup>1</sup> would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready <sup>2</sup> also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, <sup>3</sup> whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them* their portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed <sup>4</sup> is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

47. *Which knew his lord's will.* Who knew what his master wished him to do. *ne* that knows what God commands and requires. ¶ *Many stripes.* Shall be severely and justly punished. They who have many privileges, who are often warned, who have the gospel, and do not repent and believe, and do good works, shall be far more severely punished than others. They who are early taught in Sunday schools, or by pious parents, or in other ways, and grow up in sin and impenitence, will have much more to answer for than they who have no such privileges. They will justly suffer more than almost any other class of mankind.

48. *Few stripes.* The Jews did not inflict more than forty stripes for one offence. Deut. xxv. 3. For smaller offences they inflicted only four, five, six,

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat <sup>5</sup> the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will <sup>6</sup> cut him in sunder, <sup>7</sup> and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And that servant, which <sup>8</sup> knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten <sup>9</sup> with many stripes.

48 But he <sup>10</sup> that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For <sup>11</sup> unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have <sup>12</sup> committed much, of him they will ask the more.

49 ¶ I am come to send fire on

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. v. 2. <sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 10. <sup>3</sup> Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xxi. 34, 36. <sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 2. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxii. 6. <sup>6</sup> Or, cut him off. <sup>7</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 9; xciv. 14. <sup>8</sup> Jas. iv. 17. <sup>9</sup> Deut. xxv. 2. <sup>10</sup> Acts xvii. 30. <sup>11</sup> Lev. v. 17. <sup>12</sup> John xv. 22. 1 Tim. i. 13. <sup>13</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 20.

&c., according to the nature of the crime. In allusion to this our Lord says that he that knew not, that is, he who had comparatively little knowledge, shall suffer a punishment proportionably light. He refers, doubtless, to those who have fewer opportunities, smaller gifts, or more ignorant or fewer teachers. ¶ *Much is given.* They who have much committed to their disposal, as stewards, &c. See the parable of the talents, in Matt. xxv. 14—30.

49. *I am come, &c.* The result of my coming shall be that there will be divisions and contentions. He does not mean that he came for that purpose, or that he sought and desired it; but that, such was the state of the human heart, such the opposition of men to the truth, that that would be the effect of his coming. See Matt. x. 34. ¶ *Fire.* Fire, here, is the emblem of discord and contention, and

the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism<sup>1</sup> to be baptized with; and how am I<sup>2</sup> straitened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose<sup>3</sup> ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father<sup>4</sup> shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx. 22, 23. <sup>2</sup> Or, pained. <sup>3</sup> Matt. x. 34. <sup>4</sup> Mic. vii. 6. Zech. xlii. 2-6. Matt. xxiv. 10-12.

consequently of calamities. Thus it is used in Psa. lxxvi. 12. Isa. xliii. 2. ¶ *And what will I, &c.* This passage might be better expressed in this manner: And what would I, but that it were kindled. Since it is necessary for the advancement of religion that such divisions should take place; since the gospel cannot be established without conflicts, and strifes, and hatreds; I am even desirous that they should come. Since the greatest blessing of mankind must be attended with such unhappy divisions, I am willing, nay, desirous, that they should come. He did not wish evil in itself; but, as it was the occasion of good, he was desirous that, if it must take place, it should take place soon. From this we learn: 1. That the promotion of religion may be expected to produce many contests and bitter feelings. 2. That the heart of man must be exceedingly wicked, or it would not oppose a work like the christian religion. 3. That though God cannot look on evil with approbation, yet, for the sake of the benefit which may grow out of it, he is willing to permit it, and suffer it to come into the world.

50. *A baptism.* See Matt. xx. 22. ¶ *Am*

54 ¶ And he said also to the people, When<sup>5</sup> ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

57 Yea, and why even of<sup>6</sup> yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 ¶ When<sup>7</sup> thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in<sup>8</sup> the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi. 2-4. <sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 14. <sup>7</sup> Matt. v. 25. <sup>8</sup> Isa. lv. 6.

*I straitened.* How do I earnestly desire that it were passed! Since these sufferings must be endured, how anxious am I that the time should come! Such were the feelings of the Redeemer, in view of his approaching dying hour. We may learn from it, 1. That it is not improper to feel deeply at the prospect of dying. It is a sad, awful, terrible event; and it is impossible that we should look at it aright without feeling, scarcely without trembling. 2. It is not improper to desire that the time should come, and that the day of our release should draw nigh. To the Christian, death is but the entrance to life; and since the pains of death must be endured, and since they lead to heaven, it matters little how soon he passes through these sorrows, and rises to his eternal rest.

51-53. See Matt. x. 34-36.

54-57. See Notes, Matt. xvi. 2, 3. ¶ *South wind.* On the south and southwest of Judea, Arabia, Egypt, and Ethiopia were situated, all warm or hot regions, and consequently the air that came from those quarters was greatly heated. ¶ *This time.* You see a cloud rise, and predict a shower; a south wind, and expect heat. These are regular events. So you see my

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very <sup>1</sup> last mite.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Repentance taught, 1—5. The fruitless fig-tree, 6—10. The crooked woman healed, and answering, 11—17. The mustard seed and leaven, 18—21. Earnestness and sincerity taught, 22—30. Attempts to make Jesus afraid of Herod, 31—33. Jerusalem's impending fate, 34, 35.*

<sup>1</sup> See Mark xii. 42.

miracles; you hear my preaching; you have the predictions of me in the prophets; why do you not, in like manner, infer that this is the time when the Messiah should appear!

58, 59. See notes, Matt. v. xxv. xxvi.

## CHAPTER XIII.

1. *There were present.* Or some came to him who told him. ¶ *At that season.* At that time, that is, the time mentioned in the last chapter. At what period of our Lord's ministry this was, it is not easy to determine. ¶ *Some that told him.* This was doubtless an event of recent occurrence. Jesus, it is probable, had not before heard of it. Why they told Jesus of it, can only be a matter of conjecture. It might be from the desire to get him to express an opinion respecting the conduct of Pilate, and thus to involve him in difficulty with the reigning powers of Judea. It might be as a mere matter of news. But from the answer of Jesus, it would appear that they supposed that the Galileans deserved it, and that they meant to pass a judgment on the character of those men, a thing of which they were exceedingly fond. The answer of Jesus is a proof of their habit of hastily judging the character of others. ¶ *Galileans.* People who lived in Galilee. See Note on Matt. ii. 22. They were not under the jurisdiction of Pilate, but of Herod. The Galileans, in the time of Christ, were very wicked. ¶ *Whose blood Pilate had mingled, &c.* That is, while they were sacrificing at Jerusalem, Pilate came suddenly upon them, and slew them, and their blood was mingled with the blood of the animals that they were slaying for sacrifice. It does not mean that Pilate offered their blood in sacrifice,

**T**HERE were present at that season some that told him of the <sup>2</sup> Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled <sup>3</sup> with their sacrifices.

2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, <sup>4</sup> because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay: but except

<sup>2</sup> Acts v. 37. <sup>3</sup> Lam. ii. 20. <sup>4</sup> Job xxii. 5—11. John ix. 2. Acts xxviii. 4.

but only that as they were sacrificing, he slew them. The fact is not mentioned by Josephus, and nothing more is known of it than what is here recorded. We learn, however, from Josephus, that the Galileans were very wicked; that they were much disposed to broils and seditions. It appears, also, that Pilate and Herod had a quarrel with each other, Luke xxiii. 12, and it is not improbable that Pilate might feel a particular enmity to the subjects of Herod. It is likely that the Galileans excited some tumult in the temple, and that Pilate took occasion to come suddenly upon them, and show his opposition to them and Herod, by slaying them. ¶ *Pilate.* The Roman governor of Judea. Note, Matt. xxvii. 2.

2, 3. *Suppose ye, &c.* From this answer, it would appear that they supposed that the fact that these men had been slain in that manner, proved that they were very great sinners. ¶ *I tell you, Nay.* Jesus assured them that it was not right to draw such a conclusion respecting these men. The fact that men come to a sudden and violent death is not proof that they are peculiarly wicked. ¶ *Except ye repent.* Except you forsake your sins, and turn to God. Jesus took occasion, contrary to their expectation, to make a practical use of that fact, and to warn them of their danger. He never suffered a suitable occasion to pass without warning the wicked, and entreating men to forsake their evil ways. The subject of religion was always present to his mind. He introduced it easily, freely, fully. In this, he showed his love for the souls of men; and in this, he set us an example, that we should walk in his steps. ¶ *Ye shall all likewise perish.* You shall all be destroyed

ye repent, <sup>1</sup> ye shall all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 48-44; xxi. 22-24. Acts iii. 19. Rev. ii. 21, 22.

in a similar manner. Here he had reference, no doubt, to the calamities that were coming upon them, when thousands of the people perished. Perhaps there was never any reproof more delicate, and yet more severe than this. They came to him, believing that these men who had perished were peculiarly wicked. Jesus did not tell them that they were as bad as the Galileans, but he left them to infer it, for if they did not repent, they must soon likewise be destroyed. This was remarkably fulfilled. Many of the Jews were slain in the temple; many while offering sacrifice; thousands perished in a way very similar to the Galileans. Comp. Notes on Matt. xxiv. From this account of the Galileans we may learn: 1. That men are very prone to infer when any great calamity happens to others, that they are peculiarly guilty. See the book of Job, and the reasonings of his three friends. 2. That that conclusion is erroneous in the way in which it is usually drawn. If we see a man bloated, and haggard, and poor, who is in the habit of intoxication, we may infer properly that he is guilty, and that God hates his sin, and punishes it. So we may infer of the effects of licentiousness. But we should not thus infer when a man's house is burnt down, or when his children die, or when he is visited with a loss of health. Nor should we infer it of the nations that are afflicted with famine, or the plague, or with the ravages of war. Nor should we infer it when a man is killed by lightning, or when he perishes by the blowing up of a steamboat, or in any similar manner. They may be far more virtuous than many that live. 3. This is not a world of retribution. Good and evil are mingled; the good and the bad suffer, and all are exposed here to calamity. 4. There is another world, a future state, a world where the good shall be happy and the wicked punished. There all that is irregular on earth will be regulated; all that appears unequal will be made equal; all that is chaotic will be

them, think ye that they were <sup>2</sup> sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay: but except

<sup>2</sup> Or, *debtors*.

reduced to order. 5. When men are disposed to speak about the great guilt of others, and the calamities that come upon them, they should inquire about themselves. What is their character? What is their condition? It may be that they are in quite as much danger of perishing as those are whom they regard as so wicked. 6. We must repent. We must all repent, or we shall perish. No matter what befalls others, we are sinners; we are to die; we shall be lost unless we repent. Let us then think of ourselves rather than of others; and when we hear of any signal calamity happening to others, let us remember that there is calamity in another world as well as here; and that while our fellow sinners suffer here, we may be exposed to more awful woes there. Woe there, is eternal; here, a calamity like that produced by a falling tower, is soon over.

4. *Or those eighteen.* Jesus himself adds another similar case to warn them, a case which had probably occurred not long before, and which it is likely they judged in the same manner. ¶ *Upon whom the tower in Siloam fell.* The fountain of Siloam was situated at the foot of Mount Sion. Near to this was formerly a garden, called the king's garden, surrounded by a wall. Neh. ii. 13, 14. From this fountain two streams were carried to two pools, called the upper and lower pools. Compare Notes on Isa. vii. 3; xxii. 9. John ix. 7. For what purpose this tower in Siloam was erected is unknown. It might have been for guarding the place, and for keeping watch. Such towers were common on the walls, and in the neighbourhood of a city, and it is not improbable that such a tower might have been erected near this fountain. In times of war it was necessary to guard this fountain, as it was from this mainly that the city was supplied with water. What was the occasion of its fall is unknown. It probably occurred at about the time of the Saviour. See Notes on Isa. vii. 3.

5. *I tell you, Nay.* It is improper to



ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 ¶ He spake also this parable ; A <sup>1</sup> certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard ; and he came and sought <sup>2</sup> fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none : cut it down ; <sup>3</sup> why cumbereth it the ground ?

<sup>1</sup> Isa. v. 1-7. Matt. xxi. 19. <sup>2</sup> John xv. 16. Gal. v. 22. Phil. iv. 17. <sup>3</sup> Ex. xxxii. 10.

suppose that those on whom heavy judgments fall in this world are the worst of men. This is not a world of retribution. Often the most wicked are suffered to prosper here, and their punishment is reserved for another world, while the righteous are called to suffer much, and appear to be under the sore displeasure of God. Psa. lxxiii. This only we know, that the wicked shall not always escape, that God is just, and that none who do suffer here, or hereafter, suffer more than they richly deserve.

6. *This parable.* See Matt. xiii. 3. ¶ *Vineyard.* A place where vines were planted. It was not common to plant fig-trees in them, but our Lord represents it as having been sometimes done.

7. *The dresser of his vineyard.* The man whose duty it was to trim the vines, and take care of his vineyard. ¶ *These three years.* These words are not to be referred to the time which Christ had been preaching the gospel, as if he meant to specify the exact period. They mean as applicable to the vineyard, that the owner had been a long time expecting fruit on the tree. For three successive years he had been disappointed. In his view it was long enough to show that the tree was barren, and would yield no fruit, and that, therefore, it should be cut down. ¶ *Why cumbereth it the ground?* The word *cumber* here means to render barren or sterile. By taking up the juices of the earth, this useless tree rendered the ground sterile, and prevented the growth of the neighbouring vines. It was not merely useless, but was doing mischief, which may be said of all sinners, and all hypocritical professors of religion.

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone <sup>4</sup> this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it :

9 And if it bear fruit, *well* : and if not, *then* after that <sup>5</sup> thou shalt cut it down.

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath :

11 ¶ And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity <sup>6</sup> eighteen years, and was

<sup>4</sup> Psa. cvl. 23. <sup>5</sup> Pet. iii. 2. <sup>6</sup> John xv. 2. Heb. vi. 8. <sup>7</sup> Ps. vi. 2.

This parable is to be taken in connexion with what goes before, and with our Saviour's calling the Jewish nation to repentance. It was spoken to illustrate the dealings of God with them, and their own wickedness under all his kindness. And we may understand the different parts of the parable as designed to represent, 1. By the man who had the vineyard, God, to whom all things and all men pertain. 2. The vineyard as the Jewish people. 3. The coming of the owner for fruit, the desire of God that they should produce good works. 4. The barrenness of the tree, the wickedness of the people. 5. The dresser was perhaps intended to denote the Saviour, and the other messengers of God pleading that God would spare the Jews, and save them from their enemies that stood ready to destroy them as soon as God should permit. 6. His waiting denotes the delay of vengeance to give them an opportunity of repentance. And, 7. The remark of the dresser, that he might then cut it down, denotes the acquiescence of all in the belief that such a heavy judgment would be just.

We may also remark that God treats sinners thus now, that he spares them long, that he gives them opportunities of repentance, that many live but to cumber the ground, that they are not only useless to the church, but pernicious to the world, that in due time, when they are fairly tried, they shall be cut down, and that all the universe will bow to the awful decree of God and say that their damnation is just.

11. *A spirit of infirmity.* Was infirm, or was weak and afflicted. This was produced by Satan, ver. 16. ¶ *Eighteen*

bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And <sup>1</sup> he laid *his hands* on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed <sup>2</sup> on the sabbath-day, and said unto the people, There <sup>3</sup> are six days in

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi. 18. Acts ix. 17. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vi. 7; xiv. 3. Matt. xii. 10. Mark iii. 2. John v. 18. <sup>3</sup> Exod. xx. 9.

*years*. This affliction had continued a long time. This shows that the miracle was real, that the disease was not feigned. Though thus afflicted, yet it seems she was regular in attending the worship of God in the synagogue. There, in the sanctuary, is the place where the afflicted find consolation; and there it was that the Saviour met her, and restored her to health. It is in the sanctuary, and on the sabbath also that he commonly meets his people, and gives them the joys of his salvation.

12. *Thou art loosed*. This was a remarkable declaration. It does not appear that the woman applied to him for a cure. Yet Jesus addressed her, and the disease departed. How clear would be such evidence that he was the Messiah! And how mighty the power of him that by a word could restore her to health.

13. *Glorified God*. Praised God. Gave thanks to him for healing her. They who are restored to health from sickness, owe it to God, and they should give their spared lives to his service, and render praise to him that he has spared them.

14. *Answered with indignation, because, &c.* He considered this a violation of the sabbath, doing work contrary to the fourth commandment. If he had reasoned aright, he would have seen that he who could perform such a miracle could not be a violator of the law of God. From this conduct of the ruler we learn: 1. That men are often opposed to good being done, because it is not done in

which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath-day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite*, <sup>4</sup> doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose <sup>5</sup> his ox or *his ass* from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter <sup>6</sup> of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xii. 1. Prov. xi. 9. Matt. vii. 5; xxiii. 13, 28. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiv. 5. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xix. 9.

their own way, and according to their own views. 2. That they are more apt to look at what they consider a violation of the law in others, than at the good which others may do. 3. That this opposition is manifested not only against those who do good, but also against those who are benefited. This ruler of the synagogue seemed particularly indignant that the people would come to Christ to be healed. 4. That this conduct is the result of envy. In this case it was rather hatred that the people should follow Christ, instead of the Jewish rulers, than any real regard to religion. 5. That opposition to the work of Jesus often puts on the appearance of great professed regard for religion. Many men oppose conversions, revivals, missions, bible societies, and Sunday schools, strange as it may seem, from professed regard to the purity of religion. They, like the ruler here, have formed their notions of religion as consisting in something very different from doing good, and they oppose those who are attempting to spread the gospel throughout the world.

15. *Thou hypocrite*. You condemn me for an action, and yet allow one exactly similar. You condemn me for doing to a woman what you do to a beast. To her I have done good on the sabbath, you provide for your cattle, and yet blame me for working a miracle. ¶ *Stall*. A place where cattle are kept to be fed, and sheltered from the weather.

16. *A daughter of Abraham*. A de-

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: <sup>1</sup> and all the people rejoiced for all the <sup>2</sup> glorious things that were done by him.

18 ¶ Then said he, Unto <sup>3</sup> what is the kingdom of God like <sup>4</sup> and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xlv. 24. <sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 16. <sup>3</sup> Exod. xv. 11. <sup>4</sup> Psa. cxi. 3. <sup>5</sup> Isa. lv. 2. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xiii. 31. Mark iv. 30—32.

scendant of Abraham. Compare Matt. i.

She was therefore a Jewess; and the ruler of the synagogue, professing a peculiar regard for the Jewish people, considering them as peculiarly favoured of God, should have rejoiced that she was loosed from this infirmity. ¶ *Whom Satan hath bound.* Satan is the name given to the prince or leader of evil spirits, called also the devil, Beelzebub, and the old serpent. Matt. xii. 24. Rev. xii. 9; xx. 2. By his binding her, is meant that he had inflicted this disease upon her. It was not properly a possession of the devil, for that commonly produced derangement; but God had suffered him to afflict her in this manner similar to the way in which he was permitted to try Job. Job i. 12; ii. 6, 7. It is no more improbable that God would suffer Satan to inflict pain, than that he would suffer a wicked man to do it. Yet nothing is more common than for one man to be the occasion of bringing on a disease in another, which may terminate only with the life. He that seduces a virtuous man, and leads him to intemperance, or he that wounds him, or strikes him, may disable him as much as Satan did this woman. If God permits it in one case, he may for the same reason in another.

17. *Adversaries.* The ruler of the synagogue, and those who felt as he did. ¶ *All the people.* The persons who attended the synagogue, and who had witnessed the miracle. It is to be remarked, 1. That those who opposed Christ were chiefly the rulers. They had an interest in doing it. Their popularity was at

of the air lodged in the branches of it.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three <sup>4</sup> measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying towards Jerusalem.

23 Then said one unto him,

<sup>4</sup> See Matt. xiii. 33.

stake. They were afraid that he would draw off the people from them. 2. The common people heard him gladly. Many of them believed in him. The condition of the poor, and of those in humble life, is by far the most favourable for religion, and most of the disciples of Jesus have been found among the poor.

18—21. See these parables explained in Matt. xiii. 31—33.

22. *Cities and villages.* Chiefly of Galilee, and those which were between Galilee and Jerusalem. ¶ *Teaching and journeying.* This evinces the diligence of our Lord. Though on a journey yet he remembered his work. He did not excuse himself on the plea that he was in haste. Christians and christian ministers should remember that when their Master travelled he did not conceal his character, or keep back the fact that he was a professor of religion, or think that he was then freed from obligation to do good.

23. *Then said one.* Who this was, does not appear. It is probable that he was not one of the disciples, but one of the Jews who came either to perplex him, or to involve him in a controversy with the Pharisees. ¶ *Are there few that be saved?* It was the prevalent opinion among the Jews that few would enter heaven. As but two of all the hosts that came out of Egypt entered into the land of Canaan, so some of them maintained that a proportionally small number would enter into heaven. (Light-foot.) On this subject the man wished the opinion of Jesus. It was a question of idle curiosity. The answer to it would

Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

24 ¶ Strive<sup>1</sup> to enter in at the strait gate: for<sup>2</sup> many. I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When<sup>3</sup> once the master of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii. 13.    <sup>2</sup> John vii. 34; viii. 21. Rom. ix. 31.    <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxxii. 6.    Isa. lv. 6.

have done little good. It was far more important for the man to secure his own salvation than to indulge in such idle inquiries and vain speculations. Our Lord, therefore, advised him as he does all, to strive to enter into heaven.

24. *Strive*. Literally, agonize. The word is taken from the Grecian games. In their races, and wrestlings, and various athletic exercises, they strove, or agonized, or put forth all their powers to gain the victory. Thousands witnessed them. They were long trained for the conflict, and the honour of victory was one of the highest honours among the people. So Jesus says that we should strive to enter in. And he means by it, that we should be diligent, be active, be pressing, that we should make this our first and chief business to overcome our sinful propensities, and enter into heaven. This same figure, or allusion to the Grecian games, is often used in the New Testament. Notes, 1 Cor. ix. 24—26. Phil. ii. 16. Heb. xii. 1. ¶ *Strait gate*. See Note on Matt. vii. 13, 14. ¶ *Will seek to enter in*. Many, in various ways, desire to be saved. They seek it, but do not agonize for it, and hence they are shut out. But a more probable meaning of this passage is that which refers this seeking to a time that shall be too late, to the time when the master has risen up, &c. In this life, they neglect the concerns of religion, and are engaged about other things. At death, or at the judgment, they will seek to enter in. But it will be too late. The door will be shut; and because they did not make religion the chief business of their life, they cannot then enter it. ¶ *Shall not be able*. This is not designed to affirm any thing respecting the inability of the sinner, provided he seeks in a proper time and manner. It means that at the time when many will seek, when the door is shut, they shall

the house is risen up, and hath shut to<sup>4</sup> the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord,<sup>5</sup> Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say,

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxv. 10.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. vi. 46.

not be able then to enter in, agreeably to Matt. vii. 22. In the proper time, when the day of grace was lengthened out, they might have entered in. But there will be a time when it will be too late. The day of mercy will be closed, and death will come, and the doors of heaven be barred against them. How important, then, to strive to enter in, while we have opportunity, and before it shall be too late.

25. *When once the master*, &c. The figure is taken from the conduct of a housekeeper, who is willing to see his friends, and who at the proper time keeps his doors open. But there is a proper time for closing them, when he will not see his guests. At night it would be improper and vain to seek an entrance. The house would be shut. So there is a proper time to seek an entrance into heaven. But there will be a time when it will be too late. At death the time will have passed by, and God will be no longer gracious to the sinner's soul.

26. *We have eaten*, &c. Compare Matt. vii. 22, 23. To have eaten with one is evidence of acquaintanceship, or friendship. So the sinner may allege that he was a professed follower of Jesus, and had some evidence that Jesus was his friend. There is no allusion here, however, to the sacrament. It is a figure taken from the customs of men, and means simply that they had professed attachment, and perhaps supposed that Jesus was their friend. ¶ *In thy presence*. With thee, as one friend does with another. ¶ *Thou hast taught*. Thou didst favour us, as though thou didst love us. Thou didst not turn away from us, and we did not drive thee away. All this is alleged as proof of friendship. It shows us, 1. On how slight evidence men will suppose themselves ready to die. How slender is the preparation which even many professed friends of Jesus have for death. How

We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But <sup>1</sup> he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers <sup>2</sup> of iniquity.

28 There <sup>3</sup> shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii. 22, 23; xxv. 12, 41. <sup>2</sup> Psa. vi. 8; cl. 8. <sup>3</sup> Matt. viii. 12; xiii. 42; xxiv. 51.

easily they are satisfied about their own piety. A profession of religion, or attendance on the preaching of the word, or at the sacraments, or a decent external life, is all they have and all they seek. With this they go quietly on to eternity, go to disappointment, wretchedness, and woe. 2. None of these things will avail in the day of judgment. It will be only real love to God, a real change of heart, and a life of piety that can save the soul from death. And oh! how important it is, that all search themselves and see what is the real foundation of their hope that they shall enter into heaven. This passage, ver. 23—27, may teach us the following things. 1. That religion is the first and most important thing to be attended to. 2. That there is great danger that the mind will be turned away from personal religion by some speculative inquiry. How natural it is to ask whether many or few shall be saved. How interesting and important the inquiry seems. How wonderful it seems that the Lord Jesus did not answer the question. Why did he not? it may be asked. I answer, it may have been for one of two reasons. One might have been, that the man's mind would have been satisfied, and he might have gone away without any further concern. The other might have been, that if he had answered the question the man might have entered at once into an argument to show that Jesus was wrong, and thus his mind might have been diverted from his own salvation. At any rate, the answer would have done him no good. His business was plain and direct. It was to secure

29 And they <sup>4</sup> shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And, behold, there <sup>5</sup> are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

31 ¶ The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, <sup>6</sup> Get thee out, and de-

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xxviii. 14. Isa. xliii. 6; xlix. 6. Mal. i. 11. Rev. vii. 9, 10. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xix. 30. <sup>6</sup> Neh. vi. 9—14. Psa. xi. 1, 2. Am. vii. 14—17.

his own salvation, whether few or many were saved. In like manner now, men often start some speculative inquiry which they insist on having solved before they embrace the gospel. The mind is occupied by some metaphysical or abstruse subject, until life wears away, and it is too late to be saved. Man's first business is religion, and he should not allow his mind to be diverted from it by any reference to any speculative inquiry whatever. 3. We should strive to be saved. We should agonize to enter in. We should do it; a. Because it is worth all the effort which it will ever cost us. b. Because there are great hindrances from the love of sin, or the world, or our passions, or the fear of ridicule to our being saved. c. because the time will soon be passed when it is possible to be saved. Death will close the door of salvation soon against every impenitent man.

27. See Matt. vii. 23.

28—30. See Matt. viii. 11, 12.

31. *Came certain of the Pharisees.* Their coming to him in this manner, would have the appearance of friendship, as if they had conjectured, or secretly learned, that it was Herod's intention to kill him. Their suggestion had much appearance of probability. Herod had killed John. He knew that Jesus made many disciples, and was drawing away many of the people. Herod was a wicked man, and he might be supposed to fear the presence of one who had so strong a resemblance to John, whom he had slain. It might seem probable, therefore, that he intended to take the life of Jesus, and

part hence: for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, <sup>1</sup> Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be <sup>2</sup> perfected.

<sup>1</sup> Zeph. iii. 2. <sup>2</sup> John xvii. 1-5; xix. 30, (Greek). Heb. ii. 10; v. 9.

this might appear as a friendly hint to escape him. Yet it is more than possible that Herod might have sent these Pharisees to Jesus. Jesus was eminently popular, and Herod might not dare openly to put him to death. Yet he desired his removal, and for this purpose he sent these men, as if in a friendly way to advise him to retire. This was probably the reason why Jesus called him a fox. ¶ *Herod.* Herod Antipas, a son of Herod the Great. He ruled over Galilee and Perea, and wished Jesus to retire beyond these regions.

32. *Tell that fox.* A fox is an emblem of slyness, of cunning, and of artful mischief. The word is also used to denote a dissembler. Herod was a wicked man, but the particular thing to which Jesus here alludes is not his vice, but his cunning, his artifice, in endeavouring to remove him out of his territory. He had endeavoured to do it by stratagem, by sending these men who pretended great friendship for his life. ¶ *Behold I cast out devils, &c.* Announce to him the truth that I am working miracles in his territory, and that I shall continue to do it. I am not afraid of his art or his enmity. I am engaged in my appropriate work, and shall continue to be as long as is proper, in spite of his arts and his threats. ¶ *To-day and to-morrow.* A little time. It seems here to be used not strictly, but proverbially to denote a short space of time. Let not Herod be uneasy. I am doing no evil. I am not violating the laws. I only cure the sick, &c. In a little time, this part of my work will be done, and I shall retire from his dominions. ¶ *The third day.* After a little time. Perhaps, however, he meant literally that he would depart on the way to Jerusalem; that for two or three days more he should remain in the villages of Galilee, and then go on his way to Jerusalem. ¶ *I shall be perfected.*

33 Nevertheless I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O <sup>1</sup> Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 41, 42. Matt. xxiii. 37-39.

Rather, I shall have ended my course here; I shall have perfected what I purpose to do in Galilee. It does not refer to his personal perfection, for he was always perfect, but it means that he would have finished, or completed what he purposed to do, in the regions of Herod. It does not mean that he would depart on that third day, but that he would have completed his work, and would be ready then to go.

33. *I must walk, &c.* I must remain here this short time. These three days, I must do cures here, and then I shall depart, though not for fear of Herod. It will be because my time will have come, and I shall go up to Jerusalem to die. ¶ *For it cannot be that a prophet should perish out of Jerusalem.* I have no fear that Herod will put me to death in Galilee. I shall not depart on that account. Jerusalem is the place where the prophets die, and where I am to die. I am not at all alarmed, therefore, at any threats of Herod, for my life is safe until I arrive at Jerusalem. Go and tell him therefore that I fear him not. I shall work here as long as it is proper, and shall then go up to Jerusalem to die. The reasons why he said that a prophet could not perish elsewhere than in Jerusalem, might be, 1. That he knew he would be tried on a charge of blasphemy, and no other court could have cognizance of that crime but the great council, or sanhedrim, and so he was not afraid of any threats of Herod. 2. It had been the fact that the prophets had been chiefly slain there. It cannot easily be done elsewhere; it is not usually done. Prophets have generally perished there; and there I am to die. I am safe, therefore, from the fear of Herod; and shall not take the advice given, and leave his territory.

34, 35. See Matt. xxiii. 37-39.

From the message which Jesus sent to

thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!<sup>1</sup>

35 Behold,<sup>2</sup> your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, Blessed<sup>3</sup> is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xxiv. 20—22; xxxvi. 15, 16. Neh. ix. 26. Jer. ii. 30; xxvi. 23. Lam. iv. 13. <sup>2</sup> Lev. xxvi. 31. 32. Psa. lxi. 25. Isa. i. 7; v. 5, 6. Dan. ix. 27. Mic. iii. 12. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xix. 38. John xii. 13.

Herod, we may learn, 1. That our lives are safe in the hands of God, and that wicked men can do no more to injure us than he shall permit. 2. That we should go on fearlessly in doing our duty, and especially if we are doing good. We should not regard the threats of men. God is to be obeyed; and even if obedience should involve us in difficulty and trials, still we should not hesitate to commit our cause to God, and go onward. 3. We should be on our guard against crafty and unprincipled men. They often profess to seek our good, when they are only plotting our ruin. And even those professedly coming from our enemies to caution us, are often also our enemies, and are secretly plotting our ruin, or endeavouring to prevent our doing good. 4. We see here the nature of religion. It shrinks at nothing which is duty. It goes forward trusting in God. It comes out boldly and faces the world. And, 5. How beautiful and consistent is the example of Christ. How wise was he to detect the arts of his foes; and how fearless, in going forward in spite of all their machinations, to do what God had appointed for him to do.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

1. *It came to pass.* It so happened, or occurred. ¶ *As he went,* &c. It is probable that he was invited to go, being in the neighbourhood. Ver. 12. And it is also probable that the Pharisee invited him for the purpose of getting him to say something that would involve him in difficulty. ¶ *One of the chief Pharisees.* One of the Pharisees who was a ruler, or a member of the great council, or sanhe-

#### CHAPTER XIV.

*Dropsy healed at a Pharisee's house, 1—6. Against love of pre-eminence, 7—11. The poor to be cared for, 12—14. Parable of the feast that was neglected, 15—24. On counting the cost of discipleship, 25—35.*

AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath-day, that they watched<sup>4</sup> him.

2 And, behold, there was a cer-

<sup>4</sup> Psa. xxxvii. 32. Isa. xxix. 20, 21. Jer. xx. 10, 11.

drim. It does not mean that he was the head of the sect of the Pharisees, but one of those who happened to be a member of the sanhedrim. He was, therefore, a man of influence and reputation. ¶ *To eat bread.* To dine. To partake of the hospitalities of his house. *On the sabbath day.* It may seem strange that our Saviour should have gone to dine with a man of influence, and wickedness, and a stranger, on the sabbath. But we are to remember: 1. That he was travelling, having no home of his own, and that it was no more improper to go there than to any other place. 2. That he did not go there for the purpose of feasting and amusement, but to do good. 3. That as several persons were together, it gave him an opportunity to address them on the subject of religion, and to reprove their vices. If, therefore, the example of Jesus should be pleaded to authorize accepting an invitation to dine on the sabbath, it should be pleaded just as it was. If we can go just as he did, it is right. If when away from home; if we go to do good; if we make it an occasion to discourse on the subject of religion, and to persuade men to repent, then it is not improper. Further than this we cannot plead the example of Christ. And surely this should be the last instance in the world to be adduced to justify dinner parties, and scenes of riot and gluttony on the sabbath. ¶ *They watched him.* They malignantly fixed their eyes on him, to see if he did nothing on which they could lay hold to accuse him.

2. *A certain man before him.* In what way he came there we know not.

tain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is <sup>1</sup> it lawful to heal on the sabbath-day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go;

5 And answered them, saying, <sup>2</sup> Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath-day?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xiii. 15.

He might have been one of the Pharisee's family, or might have been placed there by the Pharisees, to see whether he would heal him. This last supposition is not improbable, since it is said in ver. 1, that they watched him. ¶ *The dropsy*. A disease produced by the accumulation of water in various parts of the body; very distressing, and commonly incurable.

3. *Jesus answering*. To answer, in the scriptures, does not always imply, as among us, that any thing had been said before. It means often merely to begin, or to take up a subject, or, as here, to remark on the case that was present. ¶ *Is it lawful*, &c. He knew that they were watching him. If he healed the man at once, they would accuse him. He, therefore, proposed the question to them, and when it was asked they could not say it was not lawful.

4. *They held their peace*. They were silent. They could not say it was not lawful, for the law did not forbid it. If it had, they would have said so. Here was the time for them to make objections, if they had any, and not after the man was healed. And as they made no objections then, they could not with consistency afterwards. They were, therefore, effectually silenced and confounded by the Saviour. ¶ *He took him*. Took hold of the man, or perhaps took him apart into another room. By taking hold of him, or touching him, he showed that the power of healing went forth from himself.

5, 6. See Matt. xii. 11. ¶ *Which of you*, &c. In this way Jesus refuted the

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 ¶ And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they <sup>3</sup> chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When <sup>4</sup> thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xi. 43.; xx. 46. Phil. ii. 3. 3 John 2.  
<sup>4</sup> Prov. xxv. 6, 7.

notion of the Pharisees. If it was lawful to save an ox on the sabbath, it was lawful also to save the life of a man. To this the Jews had nothing to answer.

7. *A parable*. The word *parable* here means rather a precept, an injunction; or he gave a rule or precept about the proper manner of attending a feast; or about the humility which ought to be manifested on such occasions. ¶ *That were bidden*. That were invited by the Pharisee. It seems that he had invited his friends to dine with him on that day. ¶ *When he marked*. When he observed, or saw. ¶ *Chief rooms*. The word *rooms* here does not at all express the meaning of the original. It does not mean apartments, but the higher places at the table, those which were nearest the head of the table, and to him who had invited them. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6. That this was the common character of the Pharisees, appears from Matt. xxiii. 6.

8, 9. *Art bidden*. Art invited. ¶ *To a wedding*. A wedding was commonly attended with a feast or banquet. ¶ *The highest room*. The seat at the table nearest the head. ¶ *A more honourable man*. A man of higher rank in life. A more aged man; or a man in office. It is to be remarked that our Saviour did not consider the courtesies of life to be beneath his notice. His chief design here was, no doubt, to reprove the pride and ambition of the Pharisees. But in doing this, he teaches us that religion does not violate the courtesies of life. It does not teach us to be rude, forward, pert, assum-



with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For<sup>1</sup> whosoever exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 ¶ Then said he also to him

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xviii. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 17. Job xxii. 29. Psa. xviii. 27. Prov. xv. 33; xxix. 23. Matt. xxiii. 12. Jas. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.

ing, and despising all the proprieties of refined intercourse. It teaches humility, and kindness, and a desire to make all happy, and a willingness to occupy our appropriate situation and rank in life, and this is true politeness. It is a desire to make all others happy, and a readiness to do whatever is necessary to make them so. They have utterly mistaken the nature of religion, who suppose that, because they are professed Christians, they must be rude, and uncivil, and violate all the distinctions in society. The example and precepts of Jesus Christ were utterly unlike such conduct. He teaches us to be kind, and to treat men according to their rank and character. Compare Matt. xxii. 21. Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 17.

10. *The lowest room.* The lowest seat at the table: showing that you are not desirous of distinctions, or greedy of that honour which may properly belong to you. ¶ *Shalt have worship.* The word *worship* here means honour. They who are sitting with you shall treat you with respect. They will learn your rank by your being invited nearer to the head of the table, and it will be better to learn it thus than by putting yourself forward, and they will do you honour because you have shown an humble spirit.

11. *Whosoever exalteth, &c.* This is universal among men and with God. Man will perpetually endeavour to bring down those who endeavour to exalt themselves; and it is a part of God's regular plan to abase the proud, to bring down the lofty thought, and to raise up those that be

that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor <sup>2</sup>thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the <sup>3</sup>poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 53. Prov. xiv. 20; xxii. 16. Jas. ii. 1—6. <sup>3</sup> Deut. xiv. 29; xvi. 11—14. Neh. viii. 10, 12. Job xxix. 13, 15, 16.

bowed down, and show his favour to those who are poor and needy.

12. *Call not thy friends, &c.* This is not to be understood as commanding us not to entertain at all our relatives and friends. But we are to remember the design with which our Lord spoke. He intended, doubtless, to reprove those who sought the society of the wealthy, and particularly of rich relatives, and those who claimed to be intimate with the great and honourable, and who, to show their intimacy, were in the habit of seeking their society, and making for them expensive entertainments. He meant also to commend charity shown to the poor. The passage means, therefore, call not only your friends, but call also the poor, &c. ¶ *Thy kinsmen.* Thy relations. ¶ *A recompence.* Lest they feel themselves bound to treat you with the same kindness, and in so doing, neither you nor they will show any kind spirit, or any disposition to do good beyond what is repaid.

13. *The poor.* Those who are destitute of comfortable food. *The maimed.* Those who are deprived of any member of their body, as an arm or a leg, or who have not the use of them so that they can labour for their own support.

14. *Shalt be blessed.* Blessed in the act of doing good, which furnishes more happiness than riches can give, and blessed or rewarded by God in the day of judgment. ¶ *They cannot recompense thee.* They cannot invite you again, and thus pay you; and by inviting them you

15 ¶ And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed <sup>1</sup> is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A <sup>2</sup> certain man made a great supper,<sup>3</sup> and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xix. 2. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxii. 2—14. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xxv. 6, 7.

show that you have a disposition to do good. ¶ *The resurrection of the just.* When the just or holy shall be raised from the dead. Then God shall reward those who have done good to the poor and needy from love to the Lord Jesus Christ. Matt. x. 42; xxv. 34—36.

15. *Blessed is he that shall eat bread, &c.* The kingdom of God here means the kingdom which the Messiah was to set up. See Note, Matt. iii. 2. The Jews supposed that he would be a temporal prince, and that his reign would be one of great plenty and splendour. They supposed that the Jews then would be delivered from all their oppressions, and that, from being a degraded people, they would become the most distinguished and happy nation of the earth. To that period they looked forward as one of great happiness. There is some reason to think that they supposed the ancient just men would then be raised up to enjoy the blessings of the reign of the Messiah. And our Saviour having mentioned the resurrection of the just, this man understood it in the common way of the Jews, and spoke of the peculiar happiness which they expected at that time. The Jews only, he expected, would partake of those blessings. Those notions our Saviour corrects in the parable which follows.

16. *A great supper.* Or great feast. It is said to be *great*, on account of the number who were invited. ¶ *Bade many.* Invited many beforehand. There is little difficulty in understanding this parable. The man who made the supper is without doubt designed to represent God; the supper, the provisions which He has made for the salvation of men, and the invitation, the offers which He made to men,

were bidden, Come; for <sup>4</sup> all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The <sup>6</sup> first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go

<sup>4</sup> Prov. ix. 2, 5. Cant. v. 1. Isa. lv. 1, 2. <sup>6</sup> Ch. viii. 14.

particularly to the Jews, of salvation. See a similar parable explained in Matt. xxii. 1—14.

17. *Sent his servant.* An invitation had been sent before, but this servant was sent at the time that the supper was ready. From this it would seem that it was the custom to announce to those invited just the time when the feast was prepared.

18. *I have bought a piece of ground.* Perhaps he had purchased it on condition that he found it as good as it had been represented to him. ¶ *I must needs go.* I have necessity, or am obliged to go and see it, possibly pleading a contract or an agreement that he would go soon and examine it. However, we may learn from this that sinners sometimes plead that they are under a necessity to neglect the affairs of religion. The affairs of the world, they pretend, are so pressing that they cannot find time to attend to their souls. They have no time to pray, or read the scriptures, or attend the worship of God. In this way many lose their souls. God cannot regard such an excuse for neglecting religion with approbation. He commands us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, nor can he approve any excuse that men may make for not doing it.

19. *I go to prove them.* To try them, to see if he had made a good bargain. It is worthy of remark that this excuse was very trifling. He could as easily have tried them at any other time as then; and his whole conduct shows that he was more disposed to gratify himself than to accept the invitation of his friend. He was selfish, just as all sinners are, who, to gratify their own worldliness and sin, refuse to accept the offers of the gospel.

to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have <sup>1</sup> married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry <sup>2</sup> said to his servant, Go out

quickly into the streets <sup>3</sup> and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, <sup>4</sup> and the maimed, and the halt, <sup>5</sup> and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet <sup>6</sup> there is room.

23 And the Lord said unto the

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 26. <sup>1</sup> Cor. vii. 33. <sup>2</sup> Psa. ii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxii. 17. <sup>4</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 8. Psa. cxiii. 7, 8. <sup>5</sup> Psa. xxxviii. 17. Isa. xxxiii. 23; xxxv. 6. <sup>6</sup> Psa. ciii. 6; cxxx. 7.

20. *I have married a wife*, &c. Our Saviour here doubtless intends to teach us that the love of earthly relatives and friends often takes off the affections from God, and prevents our accepting the blessings which he would bestow on us. This was the most trifling excuse of all. And we cannot but be amazed that such excuses are suffered to interfere with our salvation, and that men can be satisfied for such reasons to exclude themselves from the kingdom of God.

21. *Shewed his lord*. Told his master of the excuses of those who had been invited. Their conduct was remarkable, and it was his duty to acquaint him with their conduct. ¶ *Being angry*. Being angry at the men who had slighted his invitation; who had so insulted him, by neglecting his feast, and preferring for such reasons their own gratification to his friendship and hospitality. So it is no wonder that God is angry with the wicked every day. So foolish as well as wicked is the conduct of the sinner; so trifling is his excuse for not repenting and turning to God, that it is no wonder if God cannot look upon their conduct but with abhorrence. ¶ *Go out quickly*. The feast is ready. There is no time to lose. Those who partake of it must do it soon. So the gospel is ready, time flies, and they who partake of the gospel must do it soon, and they who preach it must give diligence to proclaim it to their fellow men. ¶ *The streets and lanes of the city*. The places where the poor, &c., would be found. Those first invited were the rich, who dwelt at ease in their own houses. By these the Jews were intended; by those who were in the streets, the Gentiles. Our Lord delivered this parable to show the Jews that the Gentiles would be called into the kingdom of

God. They despised the Gentiles, and considered them cast out and worthless, as they did those who were in the lanes of the city. ¶ *The maimed*, &c. See on ver. 13.

22. *Yet there is room*. He went out and invited all he found in the lanes, and yet the table was not full. This he also reported to his master. There is room! What a glorious declaration is this in regard to the gospel! There yet is room. Millions have been saved, but there yet is room. Millions have been invited, and have come, and have gone to heaven, but heaven is not yet full. There is a banquet there which no number can exhaust; there are fountains which no number can drink dry; there are harps there which other hands may strike; and there are seats there which others may occupy. Heaven is not full, and there yet is room. The sabbath school teacher may say to his class, there yet is room; the parent may say to his children, there yet is room; the minister of the gospel may go and say to the wide world, there yet is room. The mercy of God is not exhausted; the blood of the atonement has not lost its efficacy; heaven is not full. What a sad message it would be if we were compelled to go and say, there is no more room. Heaven is full. No other one can be saved. No matter what their prayers, or tears, or sighs, they cannot be saved. Every place is filled; every seat is occupied! But, thanks to God, this is not the message which we are to bear; and if there yet is room, come, sinners, young and old, and enter into heaven. Fill up that room, that heaven may be full of the happy and the blessed. If any part of the universe is to be vacant, O let it be the dark world of woe!

23. *Go out into the highways*. Since enough had not been found in the lanes

servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel <sup>1</sup> them to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, that <sup>2</sup> none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

25 ¶ And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cx. 3.    <sup>2</sup> Prov. i. 24.    Matt. xxi. 43.  
Heb. xii. 25.

and streets, he commands him to go into the roads, the public highways out of the city, as well as to the streets in it, and invite them also. ¶ *Hedges.* A *hedge* is the enclosure around a field or vineyard. It was commonly made of thorns which were planted thick, and which kept the cattle out of the vineyard. Those in the hedges were poor labourers employed in planting them or trimming them: men of the lowest class, and of great poverty. By his directing them to go first into the streets of the city, and then into the highways, we are not to understand our Saviour as referring to different classes of men, but only as denoting the earnestness with which God offers salvation to men, and his willingness that the most despised should come and live. Some parts of parables are thrown in for the sake of keeping, and they should not be pressed or forced, to obtain any obscure or fanciful signification. The great point in this parable was, that God would call in the Gentiles after the Jews had rejected the gospel. This should be kept always in view in interpreting all the parts of the parable. ¶ *Compel them.* That is, urge them, press them earnestly, one and all. Do not hear their excuses on account of their poverty and low rank of life, but urge them so as to overcome their objections and lead them to the feast. This expresses the earnestness of the man: his anxiety that his table should be filled, and his purpose not to reject any on account of their poverty, or ignorance, or want of apparel. So God is earnest in regard to the most polluted and vile. He commands his servants, his ministers, to urge them to come, to press on them the salvation of the gospel, and to use all the

26 If any *man* come to me, and <sup>3</sup> hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life <sup>4</sup> also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And <sup>5</sup> whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 9    Matt. x. 37.    <sup>4</sup> Acts xx.  
24.    Rev. xii. 11.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. ix. 23.    Matt. xvi.  
24.    Mark viii. 34.    2 Tim. iii. 12.

means in their power to bring into heaven poor and needy sinners.

24. *For I say unto you.* These may be considered as the words of Jesus, making an application of the parable to the Pharisees before him. ¶ *None of those men.* This cannot be understood as meaning that no Jews should be saved, but none of those who had treated him in that manner, none who had so decidedly rejected the offer of the gospel, should be saved. We may here see how dangerous it is once to reject the gospel: how dangerous to grieve away the Holy Spirit. How often God forsakes for ever the sinner who has been once awakened and invited, and who grieves the Spirit and rejects him. The invitation is full and free; but when it is rejected, and men turn wilfully away from it, God leaves them to their chosen way, and they are drowned in destruction and perdition. How important, then, is it to embrace the gospel at once; to accept the gracious invitation, and enter without delay the path that conducts to the heaven above!

25—27. See Matt. x. 37, 38.

26. *And hate not.* The word *hate*, here, means simply to love less. See the meaning of the verse in Matt. x. 37. It may be thus expressed: he that comes after me, and does not love his father less than he loves me, &c., cannot be my disciple. We are not at liberty literally to hate our parents. This would be expressly contrary to the fifth commandment. See also Eph. vi. 1—3. Col. iii. 20. But we are to love them less than we love Christ; we are to obey Christ rather than them; we are to be willing to forsake them if he calls us to go and preach his gospel; and we are to

28 For which of you, intending<sup>1</sup> to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?

29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.<sup>2</sup>

31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxiv. 27. <sup>2</sup> Heb. vi. 11.

submit, without a murmur, to him when he takes them away from us. This is not an uncommon meaning of the word *hate* in the sacred scriptures. Comp. Gen. xxix. 30, 31. Deut. xxi. 15—17. Mal. i. 3.

28. *Intending to build a tower.* See Matt. xxi. 33. A tower was a place of defence or observation, erected on high places, or in vineyards, to defend from enemies. It was made high, so as to assist in seeing an enemy when he approached; and strong, so that it could not be easily taken. ¶ *Counteth the cost.* Makes a calculation how much it will cost to build it.

29. *Haply.* Perhaps. ¶ *To mock him.* To ridicule him. To laugh at him.

31. *With ten thousand to meet, &c.* Whether he will be able with the forces which he has to meet his enemy. Christ here perhaps intends to denote that the enemies which we have to encounter in following him are many and strong, and that our strength is comparatively feeble. ¶ *To meet him.* To contend with him. To gain a victory over him.

32. *Or else.* If he is not able. If he is satisfied that he would be defeated.

¶ *An ambassage.* Persons to treat with an enemy and propose terms of peace. These expressions are not to be improperly pressed in order to obtain from them a spiritual signification. The general scope of the parable is to be learned from the connexion, and may be thus expressed: 1. Every man who becomes a follower of Jesus should calmly and deliberately look at all its consequences and be prepared to meet them. 2. Men

not down first, and consulteth<sup>3</sup> whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all<sup>4</sup> that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

34 ¶ Salt<sup>5</sup> is good: but if the

<sup>3</sup> Prov. xx. 18. <sup>4</sup> Phil. iii. 7, 8. <sup>5</sup> Matt. v. 13. Mark ix. 50.

in other things act with prudence and forethought. They do not begin to build without a reasonable prospect of being able to finish. They do not go to war when there is every prospect that they would be defeated. 3. Religion is also a work of soberness, of thought, of calm and fixed purpose, and no man can properly enter on it who does not resolve by the grace of God to fulfil all its requirements, and make it the business of his life. 4. We are to expect difficulties in religion. It will cost us the mortification of our sins, and a life of self-denial, and a conflict with our lusts, and the enmity and ridicule of the world. Perhaps it may cost us our reputation, or possibly our lives and liberties, and all that is dear to us. But we must cheerfully undertake all this, and be prepared for all that is before us. 5. If we do not deliberately resolve to leave all things, to suffer all things that may be laid on us, and to persevere to the end of our days in the service of Christ, we cannot be his disciples. No man can be a Christian who, when he makes a profession, is resolved after a while to turn back to the world. Nor can he be if he expects that he will turn back. If he comes not with a full purpose always to be a Christian; if he means not to persevere, by the grace of God, through all hazards, and trials, and temptations, if he is not willing to bear his cross, and meet contempt, and poverty, and pain, and death, without turning back, he cannot be a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

34, 35. See Matt. v. 13. Mark ix. 49, 50. Salt is good. It is useful. It is good

salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men<sup>1</sup> cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## CHAPTER XV.

*Parables—Lost sheep recovered, 1—7. Lost money found, 8—10. Prodigal son returned, 11—32.*

**T**HEN<sup>2</sup> drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth<sup>3</sup> with them.

<sup>1</sup> John xv. 6. <sup>2</sup> Matt. ix. 10—13. <sup>3</sup> Acts xi. 3. <sup>1</sup> Cor. v. 9—11. Gal. ii. 12.

to preserve life and health, and to keep from putrefaction. ¶ *His savour.* Its saltness. It becomes tasteless or insipid. ¶ *Be seasoned.* Be salted again. ¶ *Fit for the land.* Rather, it is not fit for land, i. e. it will not bear fruit of itself. You cannot sow or plant on it. ¶ *Nor for the dunghill.* It is not good for manure. It will not enrich other land. ¶ *Cast it out.* They throw it away as useless. ¶ *He that hath ears, &c.* See Matt. xi. 15. You are to understand that he that has not grace in his heart, who merely makes a profession of religion, and who sustains the same relation to true piety that this insipid and useless mass does to good salt, is useless in the church, and will be rejected. Real piety, true religion, is of vast value in the world. It keeps it pure, it saves it from corruption, as salt does meat. But a mere profession of religion is fit for nothing. It does no good. It is a mere encumbrance, and all such professors are fit only to be cast out and rejected. All such must be rejected by the Son of God, and cast into a world of wretchedness and despair. Compare Job viii. 13; xxxvi. 13. Matt. vii. 22, 23; viii. 12; xxiii. 33; xxv. 30. Rev. iii. 16.

## CHAPTER XV.

1. *Publicans and sinners.* See Note on Matt. ix. 10.

3 ¶ And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What<sup>4</sup> man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep<sup>5</sup> which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii. 12. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxix. 176. <sup>1</sup> Pet. ii. 25.

2. *Murmured.* They affected to suppose that if he treated them kindly he must be fond of their society, and be a man of similar character. They considered it disgraceful to be with them, or to eat with them, and they therefore brought a charge against him for it. They would not suppose that he could admit them to his society for the purpose of doing them good; nor did they remember that the very object of his coming was to call the wicked from their ways, and to save them from death. ¶ *Receiveth sinners.* Receives them in a tender manner, treats them with kindness, does not drive them from his presence. ¶ *And eateth with them.* Contrary to the received maxims of the scribes. By eating with them he showed that he did not despise or overlook them.

3. *This parable.* See Note, Matt. xiii. 3.

4—6. See Matt. xviii. 12, 13.

7. *Likewise joy, &c.* It is a principle of human nature that the recovery of an object in danger of being lost, affords much more intense joy than the quiet possession of many that are safe. This our Saviour illustrated by the case of the lost sheep, and of the piece of silver. It might also be illustrated by many other things. Thus we rejoice most in our health when we recover from a dangerous disease; we rejoice over a child rescued from danger or disease more than over

joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which <sup>1</sup> need no repentance.

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten <sup>2</sup> pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 32. <sup>2</sup> Drachma, here translated a piece of silver, is the eighth part of an ounce, which cometh to seven-pence half-penny, and is equal to the Roman penny. See Matt. xviii. 26.

many who may be in health or safety. We rejoice that property is saved from conflagration or the tempest, more than over much more that has not been in danger. This feeling our Lord represents as existing in heaven. *Likewise*, in like manner, or on the same principle, there is joy. ¶ *In heaven*. Among the angels of God. Compare ver. 10. The heavenly beings are thus represented as rejoicing over those who repent on earth. They see the guilt and danger of men; they know what God has done for them, and they rejoice at the recovery of any from the guilt and ruin of sin. ¶ *One sinner*. One rebel against God, however great may be his sins, or however small. If a sinner, he must perish unless he repents, and they rejoice at his repentance because it recovers him back to the love of God, and because it will save him from death.

¶ *That repenteth*. See Matt. ix. 13. ¶ *Just persons*. The word *persons* is not in the original. It means simply just ones, or those who have not sinned. It may refer to angels as well as to men. There are no just men on earth who need no repentance. There have been none, and there will be none. Psa. xiv. 2, 3. Eccles. vii. 20. Rom. iii. 10—18. Our Saviour did not mean to imply that there were any such. He was speaking of what took place in heaven, in the view of the angels, and of their emotions when they contemplated the creatures of God. And he says that they rejoiced in the repentance of one sinner more than in the holiness of many who had not fallen. We are not to suppose that our Saviour meant to teach that there were just ninety-nine holy angels to one sinner. He means

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, <sup>3</sup> there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

11 ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons:

<sup>3</sup> Ezek. xviii. 23, 32; xxxviii. 11. Acts xi. 18. Phil. 15. 16.

merely that they rejoice more over the repentance of one sinner than they do over many who have not fallen. By this our Saviour vindicated his own conduct. The Jews did not deny the existence of angels. They would not deny that their feelings were proper. If they rejoiced in this manner, it was not improper for him to show similar joy, and especially to seek their conversion and salvation. If they rejoice also, it shows how desirable is the repentance of a sinner. They know of how much value is an immortal soul. They see what is meant by eternal death; and they do not feel too much, or have too much anxiety about the soul that can never die. O that men saw it as they see it, and O that they would make an effort, such as angels see to be proper, to save their souls from eternal death!

8—10. *Ten pieces of silver*. In the original, ten drachmas. They amounted to about six shillings. The amount is of no consequence in understanding the text. ¶ *There is joy in the presence, &c.* Jesus in this parable expresses the same sentiment which he did in the preceding. A woman would have more immediate, present joy, at finding a lost piece, than she would in the possession of those which had not been lost. So, says Christ, there is joy among the angels at the recovery of a single sinner.

11. *And he said*. Jesus, to illustrate still further the sentiment which he had uttered, and to show that it was proper to rejoice over repenting sinners, proceeds to show it by a most beautiful and instructive parable. We shall see its beauty and propriety by remembering that the design of it was simply to justify his conduct in

## CHAPTER XV.

Peræa

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.<sup>1</sup>

13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far

<sup>1</sup> Mark xii. 44.

receiving sinners, and to show that to rejoice over their return was proper. This he shows by the feelings of a father rejoicing over the return of an ungrateful and dissipated son.

12. *And the younger of them said.* By this younger son we are to understand the publicans and sinners to be represented. By the elder, the Pharisees and scribes. ¶ *Give me the portion.* The part. ¶ *Of goods.* Of property. ¶ *That falleth to me.* That is properly my share. There is no impropriety in supposing that he was of age, and as he chose to leave his father's house, it was proper that his father should, if he chose, give him the part of the estate which would be his. ¶ *He divided unto them his living.* His property, or means of living. The division of property among the Jews gave the elder son twice as much as the younger. In this case it seems the younger son received only money or moveable property, and the elder chose to remain with his father and dwell on the paternal estate. His lands and fixed property remained in his possession. Among the ancient Jews and Syrophenicians, it was customary when a son came to the years of maturity, if he demanded his part of the inheritance, for the father to give it to him. This the son might claim by law. It is possible that such a custom may have prevailed among the Jews, and that the Saviour refers to some such demand by the young man.

*Gathered all together.* Collected property. If he had received flocks and herds, he sold them and converted them into money. As soon as this arrangement was made, he left his father's house, and took his journey. Went, or travelled, into a far country. A country far off from his father's house. He went probably to seek his fortune; and in his

country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.<sup>2</sup>

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country;

<sup>2</sup> Prov. v. 8-14; xxi. 17, 20. Am. vi. 3-7.  
<sup>3</sup> Am. viii. 11, 12.

wanderings came at last to this dissipated place, where his property was soon expended. ¶ *Wasted his substance.* Spent his property. ¶ *In riotous living.* Literally, *living without saving anything.* He lived extravagantly, and in the most dissolute company. See ver. 30. By his wandering away, we may understand that the sinners wander far away from God; that they fall into dissolute and wicked company; and their wandering so far off is the reason why they fall into such calamity, and are so soon and so easily destroyed.

14. *A mighty famine.* Famines were common in eastern nations. They were caused by the failure of the crops, by a want of timely rains, a genial sun, or sometimes by the prevalence of the plague, or of the pestilence which swept off numbers of the inhabitants. In this case it is very naturally connected with the luxury, and indolence, and dissipation of the people in that land.

15. *Joined himself.* Entered the service of that citizen. Hired himself out to him. It would seem that he engaged to do any kind of work, even the lowest. ¶ *A citizen.* One of the inhabitants of one of the cities or towns of that region, probably a man of property. ¶ *Into the fields.* Out of the city where the owner lived. ¶ *To feed swine.* This was a very low employment, and particularly so to a Jew. It was forbidden to the Jews to eat swine, and of course it was unlawful to keep them. To be compelled, therefore, to engage in such an emigration was the deepest conceivable degradation. The object of this image, as used by the Saviour in the parable, is to show the loathsome employments, and the deep degradation to which sin leads men; and no circumstance could possibly illustrate it in a more striking manner than he



and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks <sup>1</sup> that the swine <sup>2</sup> did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to him-

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xlv. 20. Hos. xii. 1. <sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 22. Jon. ii. 8.

has done here. Sin and its results everywhere have the same relation to that which is noble and great which the feeding of swine had in the estimation of a Jew to an honourable and dignified employment.

16. *He would fain.* He would gladly. He desired to do it. ¶ *The husks.* The word *husks* with us denotes the outward covering of corn. In this there is little nourishment, and it is evident that this is not intended here. But the word used here denotes not only husks but also leguminous plants, as beans, &c. It is also used to denote the fruit of a tree, called the *carob tree*, and is common in Ionia, Syria, and Rhodes. Its fruit is used to fatten swine. It is also food for the poorer people. It is mealy, and has a sweetish taste: it grows in hedges, and is of little account. It is sometimes there called John's bread, from a tradition that John the Baptist lived on it. ¶ *No man gave unto him.* Some have understood this as meaning, no one gave him any thing: any bread, or provisions. But the connexion requires us to understand it of the husks. He did not go a begging, his master was bound to provide for his wants. But the provision which he made for him was so poor that he would have preferred the food of the swine. He desired a portion of their food. But that was not given him. A certain quantity was measured out for them, and he was not at liberty to eat it himself. Nothing could more strikingly show the evil of his condition, and nothing more clearly the deep degradation, and pollution, and wretchedness of sin.

17. *He came to himself.* This is a very expressive phrase. It is commonly applied to one who has been deranged, and when he recovers, we say he has come to himself. In this place it denotes that the folly of the young man was a kind of

self, <sup>3</sup> he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I <sup>4</sup> will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Fa-

<sup>3</sup> Ecc. ix. 3. Jer. xxxi. 19. Ezek. xviii. 28. <sup>4</sup> 2 Chron. xli. 14. Psa. xxxii. 5; cxvi. 3-7. Jer. xxxi. 9; i. 4, 5. Hos. xii. 1-3.

derangement, that he was insane. So it is true of every sinner. Madness is in their hearts, Ecc. ix. 3; they are estranged from God, and led, by the influence of evil passions, contrary to their better judgment, and the decisions of a sound mind. ¶ *Hired servants.* Those in a low condition of life, those who were not born to wealth, and who had no friends to provide for them. ¶ *I perish.* I, who had property, and a kind father, and who might have been provided for, and happy.

18. *I will arise.* This is a common expression among the Hebrews, to denote entering on a piece of business. It does not imply that he was sitting, but that he meant immediately to return. This should be the feeling of every sinner who is conscious of his guilt and danger. ¶ *To my father.* To his father, although he had offended him, and treated him unkindly, and had provoked him, and cast him off. So the sinner. He has nowhere else to go but to God. He has offended him, but he may trust in his kindness. If God does not save him he cannot be saved. There is no other being that has an arm strong enough to deliver from sin; and though it is painful to a man to go to one whom he has offended, though he cannot go but with shame and confusion of face, yet unless the sinner is willing to go to God and confess his faults, he can never be saved. ¶ *I have sinned.* I have been wicked, have been dissipated, ungrateful, and rebellious. ¶ *Against heaven.* The word *heaven* here, as it is often elsewhere, is put for God. I have sinned against God. See Matt. xxi. 23. It is also to be observed, that one evidence of the genuineness of repentance is the feeling that our sins have been committed chiefly against God. Commonly, we think most of our offences as committed against man. But when the sinner

ther, I have sinned <sup>1</sup> against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xviii. 13. Job xxxiii. 27, 28; xxxvi. 8-10. 1 John i. 8-10.

sees their true character; when his heart is properly affected by them, he sees that they have been aimed chiefly against God, and that the sins against man are of little consequence compared with those against God. So David, even after adultery and murder, after having inflicted the deepest injury on man, yet felt that the sin, as committed against God, shut every other consideration out of view; "Against thee, thee only have I sinned," &c. Ps. li. 4. ¶ *Before thee.* This means the same as against thee. The offences had been committed against God by his dissipation, but against his father in wasting property which he had given him; in neglecting his counsels, and plunging himself into ruin. He felt that he had disgraced such a father. A sinner will be sensible of his sins against his relatives and friends, as well as against God. A true penitent will be as ready to acknowledge his offences against his fellow men as those against his Maker.

19. *No more worthy, &c.* Such has been my conduct that I have been a disgrace to my father. I am not fit to be honoured by being called the son of a father so kind and virtuous. ¶ *Make me as one, &c.* Treat me as a servant. Let me come again into your family, but I do not ask to be treated as a son. I am willing to come in if you will give me only the support that you give to a servant. This evinced, 1. Deep humility, such as a sinner should have. 2. Love for his father's house, such as all penitents should have towards God's dwelling place in heaven. And, 3. Confidence in his father, that he would treat him kindly, even if he treated him as a servant. Such confidence as all returning penitents feel in God. They are assured that God will treat them kindly, that whatever he gives them will be more than they deserve; and they are, therefore, willing to be in

a great way <sup>2</sup> off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, <sup>3</sup> and in thy sight, and am

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 39. Eph. ii. 13, 17. <sup>3</sup> Ps. li. 4; cxliii. 2.

his hands. Yet, 4. He had no adequate sense of his father's kindness. He did not fully appreciate his character. He was far more kind than he had dared to hope he would be, just as all sinners undervalue the character of God, and find him always more kind than they had supposed. No sinner comes to God with a just and adequate view of his character, but always finds him more merciful than he had dared to hope.

20. *He arose and came.* Was coming. But here is no indication of haste. He did not run, but came driven by his wants; and, as we may suppose, filled with shame, and even with some doubts whether his father would receive him. ¶ *A great way off.* This is a beautiful description, the image of his father's happening to see him clad in rags, poor, and emaciated, and yet he recognized his son, and all the feelings of a father excited him to go and embrace him. ¶ *Had compassion.* Pitied him. Saw his condition, his poverty, and wretched appearance, and was moved with compassion and love. ¶ *And ran.* This is opposed to the manner in which the son came. The beauty of the picture is greatly heightened by these circumstances. The son came slowly, the father ran. The love and joy of the old man were so great that he hastened to meet him and welcome him to his home. ¶ *Fell on his neck.* Threw his arms around his neck and embraced him. ¶ *And kissed him.* This was a sign at once of affection and reconciliation. This must at once have dissipated every doubt of the son, about the willingness of his father to forgive and receive him. A kiss is a sign of affection. Gen. xxix. 13. 1 Sam. x. 1. This is evidently designed to denote the readiness of God to pity and pardon returning sinners. In this verse of inimitable beauty, is contained the point of the parable, which was uttered by the Saviour

no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring<sup>1</sup> forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

<sup>1</sup> Zech. iii. 3-5. Isa. lxi. 10. Ezek. xvi. 9. -13.

to vindicate his own conduct in receiving sinners kindly. Who could blame this father for thus receiving this repenting son? Not even a Pharisee could blame him. And our Saviour thus showed them, so that they could not resist it, that God received returning sinners, and that it was right for him also to receive them and treat them with attention.

22. *The best robe.* The son was probably in rags. The joy of the father is expressed by clothing him in the best raiment, that he might appear well. The robe here mentioned is probably the outer garment; and the father told them to put on him the best one that was in the house, one reserved for festival occasions. See Gen. xxvii. 15. ¶ *A ring on his hand.* To wear a ring on the hand was one mark of wealth and dignity. The rich and those in office commonly wore them. Compare Jas. ii. 2. To give a ring was a mark of favour, or of affection, or of conferring office. Compare Gen. xli. 42. Est. viii. 2. Here it was expressive of the favour and affection of the father. ¶ *Shoes on his feet.* Servants probably did not usually wear shoes. The son returned doubtless without shoes, a condition very unlike that in which he was when he left home. When, therefore, the father commanded them to put shoes on him, it expressed his wish that he should not be treated as a servant, but as a son. The word *shoes* here, however, means no more than sandals, such as were commonly worn. And the meaning of all these images is the same, that God will treat those who return to him, with kindness and affection. These images should not be attempted to be spiritualized. They are beautifully thrown in to fill up the narrative, and to express with more force the general truth that God will treat returning penitents

24 For<sup>2</sup> this my son was dead,<sup>3</sup> and is alive<sup>4</sup> again; he was<sup>5</sup> lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 32. <sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 1; v. 14. Rev. iii. 1. <sup>4</sup> Rom. vi. 11, 13. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xix. 10. Ezek. xxxiv. 4, 16. <sup>6</sup> Psa. xxx. 11; cxlv. 1, 2.

with mercy and with love. To dress up the son in this manner was a proof of the father's affection. So God will bestow on sinners the marks of his confidence and regard.

23. *Be merry.* Literally, *eating, let us rejoice.* The word *merry* does not quite express the meaning of the Greek. Merriment denotes a light, playful, jovial mirth. The Greek denotes simply joy, let us be happy, or joyful.

24. *Was dead.* This is capable of two significations: 1. I supposed that he was dead, but I know now that he is alive. 2. He was dead to virtue, he was sunk in pleasures and vice. The word is not unfrequently thus used. See Matt. viii. 22. Rom. vi. 13. 1 Tim. v. 6. Hence to be restored to virtue is said to be restored again to life. Rom. vi. 13. Eph. ii. 1. Rev. iii. 1. It is probable that this latter is the meaning here. See ver. 32. ¶ *Was lost.* Had wandered away from home, and we knew not where he was.

25. *In the field.* At work. This eldest son is designed to represent the Pharisees who had found fault with our Saviour. Their conduct is likened to that of this envious and unnatural brother. ¶ *Music and dancing.* Dancing was not uncommon among the Hebrews, and was used on various occasions. Thus Miriam celebrated the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt, in dances as well as songs. Exod. xv. 20. David danced before the ark. 2 Sam. vi. 14. It was common at Jewish feasts, Judg. xxi. 19-21; and in public triumphs, Judg. xi. 34; and at all seasons of mirth and rejoicing. Psa. xxx. 11. Jer. xxxi. 4, 13. It was also used in religious services by the idolaters, Exod. xxxii. 19; and also by the Jews at times in their religious services. Psa. cxlix. 3; cl. 4. In this case it was

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, 'Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, <sup>1</sup> and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

29 And he answering said to

<sup>1</sup> Jonah iv. 1—3. Rom. x. 19.

an expression of rejoicing. Our Lord expresses no opinion about its propriety. He simply states the fact, nor was there occasion for comment on it. His mentioning it cannot be pleaded for its lawfulness or propriety, any more than his mentioning the vice of the younger son, or the wickedness of the Pharisees, can be pleaded to justify their conduct. It is an expressive image used in accordance with the known customs of the country to express joy. It is further to be remarked, that if the example of persons in scripture be pleaded for dancing, it can be only for just such dances as they practised, for sacred or triumphal occasions.

26—28. *Safe and sound.* In health.

29. *A kid.* A young goat. This was of less value than the calf; and he complains that while his father had never given him a thing of so little value as a kid, he had now given his other son the fatted calf. ¶ *Make merry with.* Entertain them, give them a feast. This complaint was unreasonable, for his father had divided his property, and he might have had his portion, and his father had uniformly treated him with kindness. But it serves to illustrate the conduct of the scribes and Pharisees, and the folly of their complaint.

30. *This thy son.* This son of thine. This is an expression of great contempt. He did not call him his brother, but his father's son, to show at once his contempt for his younger brother, and for his father for having received him as he did. Never was there a more striking instance of petty malice, or more unjustifiable disregard of a father's conduct and will. ¶ *Thy living.* Thy property. This is still designed to

his father, Lo, these many years do I <sup>2</sup> serve thee, neither transgressed <sup>3</sup> I at any time thy commandment: and yet <sup>4</sup> thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son,

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 11. Isa. lxxv. 5. <sup>3</sup> Phil. iii. 6.  
<sup>4</sup> Ch. xix. 21. Mal. i. 12; iii. 14.

irritate the father, and set him against his younger son. It was true that the younger son had been guilty, and foolish, and ungrateful; but he was penitent, and that was of more consequence to the father than all his property; and in the joy that he was penitent and was safe, he forgot his ingratitude and folly. So should the elder son have done.

31. *All that I have is thine.* The property was divided. What remained was in reality the elder son's. He was heir to it all, and had a right, if he chose, to use it. He had, therefore, no right to complain.

This instructive and beautiful parable was designed to vindicate the conduct of Jesus, to show that it was right to receive sinners, and that the conduct of the Pharisees was unreasonable. The elder son represents the Pharisees; the younger, returning sinners, whether Jew or Gentile; and the father, God, who is willing to receive them. The parable had the designed effect. It silenced murmuring, and vindicated the conduct of Jesus. There is not perhaps any where to be found a more beautiful and touching narrative than this. Every circumstance is tender and happily chosen; every word has a meaning; every image is beautiful; and the narrative closes just where it is fitted to make the deepest impression. In addition to what has been suggested, we may learn from this parable, the following lessons:—

I. That the disposition of a sinner is selfish. He desires to get all that he can, and is impatient of delay. Ver. 12.

II. Sinners waste their blessings, and reduce themselves to a state of want and wretchedness. Ver. 13. A life of sin

thou art ever <sup>1</sup> with me, and all that I have is thine.

Rom. ix. 4; xi. 1.

brings on spiritual want and misery. It destroys the faculties; benumbs the mind, hardens the heart, abuses the beneficence of God, and makes us careless of him who gave it and of the consequences.

III. Sinners disregard the future woes that will come upon them. The young man cared not for any calamities that might be the result of his conduct. He went on heedlessly, like every sinner, to enjoy himself, and to squander what the toils of his father had procured for him.

IV. Afflictions are often the means of bringing sinners to reflection. Ver. 14. While the young man's property lasted, he cared little about his father. When that was gone, and he was in the midst of a famine, he thought of his ways. When sinners are in prosperity, they think little about God. When he takes away their mercies, and they are called to pass through afflictions, then they think of their ways, and remember that God can give them comfort.

V. We have here an impressive exhibition of the wants and woes of a sinner. 1. The young man had spent all. He had nothing. So the sinner. He has no righteousness, no comfort. 2. He is far from God; away from his father, and in a land of strangers. The sinner has wandered, and has no friend. His miseries came upon him because he is so far away from God. 3. His condition is wretched. He is needy, in famine, and without a friend. His condition is aptly denoted by that of the prodigal who would gladly have partaken of the food of the swine. The sinner has taken the world for his portion, and it neither supplies the wants of his immortal soul, nor gives him comfort when he is far away from his Father's home, and from God.

VI. The sinner, in this situation, often applies to the wrong source of comfort. Ver. 15. The prodigal should at once have returned to his father, but he rather chose to become a servant of a citizen of that region. The sinner, when sensible of his sins, should return at once to God. But he often continues still to wander. He tries new objects. He seeks new pleasures, and new friends, and finds

32 It was meet <sup>2</sup> that we should make merry, and be glad: <sup>3</sup> for <sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jon. iv. 10, 11. <sup>3</sup> Psa. li. 8. Isa. xxxv. 10. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 24.

them equally unsatisfactory. He engages in new pursuits, but all in vain. He is still comfortless, and in a strange, a famished land.

VII. The repentance required in the gospel is a return to a right mind. Ver. 17. Before, the sinner was alienated from God. He was spiritually deranged. He saw not things as they are. Now he looks on the world as vain and unsatisfactory, and comes to himself. He thinks aright of God, of heaven, of eternity, and resolves to seek his happiness there. No man regards things as they are, but he who sees the world to be vain, and eternity to be near and awful; and none acts with sane mind but he who acts on the belief that he must soon die, that there is a God and a Saviour, a heaven and a hell.

VIII. When the sinner returns, he becomes sensible of the following things: 1. That he is in danger of perishing, and must soon die but for relief. "I perish with hunger." 2. That God is willing and able to save him. "How many hired servants have bread enough and to spare." There is abundance of mercy for all, and all may come. 3. He begins to cherish a hope that this may be his. God is willing, and he feels that all that is needful is for him to go. 4. He resolves to go to God. "I will arise and go." 5. He comes to him willing to confess all his sins, and desirous of concealing none. "I will say, father, I have sinned."

IX. True repentance is a voluntary act. It is not forced. It is the resolution of the sinner to go, and he cheerfully and cordially arises and goes. Ver. 18.

X. A real penitent feels that his sins have been committed against God. Ver. 18.

XI. A true penitent also is willing to acknowledge his offences against his parents, brothers, friends, and all men. Ver. 18.

XII. A real penitent is humble. Ver. 18. He has no wish to conceal any thing or to be thought more highly of than he ought to be.

XIII. God is willing to receive the true penitent, and has made the richest provision for his return and for his comfort. None need to hesitate to go. All

this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Parable of the dishonest steward, 1—12.*

*A divided heart, covetousness, and impurity condemned, 13—18. Para-*

who go, feeling that they are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, shall find God willing to receive them, and shall none be sent empty away.

XIV. The joy at the return of sinners is great. Angels rejoice over it, and all holy beings are glad.

XV. We should not be envious at any favours that God may be pleased to bestow on others. Ver. 32. He has given us more than we deserve, and if, by the sovereignty of his grace, he is pleased to endow others with more grace, or to give them greater talents, or to make them more useful, we have no cause to complain. We should rather rejoice that he is pleased to give such mercies to any mortals, and should praise him for the manifestation of his goodness, whether made to us, or to other men.

XVI. The joy when the sinner returns to God is often greater than that which may be felt after the return, and yet the real cause of rejoicing be no greater. In times of revival, the joy of Christians may be greater than in ordinary seasons. Their graces are quickened, their zeal kindled, and their hopes strengthened.

XVII. If God is willing to receive sinners, if all holy beings rejoice, then how should Christians strive for their conversion, and seek for their return!

XVIII. If God is willing to receive sinners now, then all should at once return. There will be a time when he will not be willing to receive them. The day of mercy will be ended. And from the misery and want of this wretched world they will go down to the deeper miseries and wants of a world of despair, where hope never comes, from whence the sinner can never return, and where the cheering thought can never enter the mind, that in his father's house there is bread enough and to spare, or if there is, it will be for ever untasted and unpossessed by the wretched prodigal, in the land of eternal famine and death.

*ble of the rich man and Lazarus, 19—31.*

AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1. *His disciples.* The word *disciples*, here, is not to be restricted to the twelve apostles, or to the seventy. This parable is connected with that in the preceding chapter. Jesus had there been discoursing with the scribes and Pharisees, and vindicating his conduct in receiving kindly publicans and sinners. These publicans and sinners are included with those who are here denoted by the word *disciples*. It was with reference to them that the whole discourse had arisen. After Jesus had shown the Pharisees, in the preceding chapter, the propriety of his conduct, it was natural that he should turn and address his disciples. Among them there might have been some who were wealthy. The publicans were engaged in receiving taxes, in collecting money, and their chief danger arose from that quarter, from covetousness, or dishonesty. Jesus always adapted his instructions to the circumstances of his hearers, and it was proper, therefore, that he should give these disciples instructions about their peculiar duties and dangers. He related this parable, therefore, to show them the danger of the love of money, the guilt it would lead to, ver. 1; the perplexities and shifts to which it would drive a man when once he had been dishonest, ver. 3—7; the necessity of using money aright, since it was their chief business, ver. 9; and the fact, that if they would serve God aright, they must give up supreme attachment to money, they could not serve God and mammon, ver. 13; and that the first duty of religion demanded that they should resolve to serve God, and be honest in the use of the wealth entrusted to them. This parable has given great perplexity, and a great many ways have been devised to explain it. The above solution is the most simple of any; and if these plain principles are kept in view, it will not be difficult to give a consistent explanation of its particular parts. It should be borne in mind, how-

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship: <sup>1</sup> for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 42. 1 Cor. iv. 2. 1 Tim. iv. 14. 1 Pet. iv. 10.

ever, that in this as well as in other parables, we are not to endeavour to spiritualize every circumstance or allusion. We are to keep in view the great moral that we cannot serve God and mammon, and that all attempts to serve mammon and God together will involve us in difficulty and sin. ¶ *A steward.* One who has charge of the affairs of a family or household, whose duty it was to provide for the family, to purchase provisions, &c. This was, of course, an office of much trust and confidence. It afforded great opportunity for dishonesty, and waste, and for embezzling property. The master's eye could not always be on the steward, and he might, therefore, squander the property, or hoard it up for his own use. It was an office commonly conferred on a slave as a reward for fidelity, and of course was given to him that, in long service, had shown himself most trustworthy. By the *rich man*, here, is doubtless represented God. By the *steward*, those who are his professed followers, particularly the publicans who were with the Saviour, and whose chief danger arose from the temptations to the improper use of the money entrusted to them. ¶ *Was accused.* Complaint was made. ¶ *Had wasted.* Had squandered or scattered; had not been prudent and saving.

2. *Give an account.* Give a statement of your expenses, and of your conduct while you have been steward. This is not to be referred to the day of judgment. It is a circumstance thrown into the parable to prepare the way for what follows. It is true that all will be called to give an account, but we are not to derive that doctrine from such passages as this; nor are we to interpret this as teaching that our conscience, or the law, or any beings will accuse us in the day of judgment. All that will be true, but it is not the truth that is taught in this passage.

lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; <sup>2</sup> to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, <sup>3</sup> that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xx. 4. Mark x. 46. Acts iii. 2. <sup>3</sup> Jer. iv. 22.

3. *Said within himself.* Thought, or considered. ¶ *My lord.* My master, my employer. ¶ *I cannot dig.* This may mean either that his employment had been such that he could not engage in agriculture, not having been acquainted with the business, or that he was unwilling to stoop to so low an employment as to work daily for his support. To *dig*, here, is the same as to till the earth, to work at daily labour. ¶ *To beg.* These were the only two ways that presented themselves for a living, either to work for it, or to beg. ¶ *I am ashamed.* He was too proud for that. Besides, he was in good health and strength, and there was no good reason why he should beg, nothing which he could give as a cause for it. It may be proper for the sick, and lame, and feeble, to beg, but it is not well for the able-bodied to do so; nor is it well to aid them except by giving them employment, and compelling them to work for a living. He does the most real kindness to a beggar able to work, who sets him to work; and as a general rule we should not aid an able-bodied man or woman in any other way. Set them to work and pay them a fair compensation, and you do them good in two ways, and the habit of labour may be of more value to them than the price you pay them.

4. *I am resolved.* He thought of his condition. He looked at the plans which occurred to him. He had been dishonest, and knew he must lose his place. It would have been better to have considered before this, and resolved on a proper course of life, and to be faithful to his trust. And his perplexity, here, teaches us that dishonesty will sooner or later lead us into difficulty, and that the path of honesty is not only the right path, but is the path that is filled with most comfort and peace. ¶ *When I am put out, &c.* When I lose my place, and have no home, and as

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said *unto the first*, How much owest thou *unto my lord*?

6 And he said, An hundred <sup>1</sup> measures of oil. And he said un-

<sup>1</sup> The word *batus* in the original containeth nine gallons three quarts. See *Exek.* xiv. 10-14.

means of support. ¶ *They may receive me &c.* Those who are now under me, and whom I am resolved now to favour. He had been dishonest to his master; and, having commenced a course of dishonesty, he did not shrink from pursuing it. Having injured his master, and being now detected, he was willing still further to injure him, to take revenge on him for removing him from his place, and to secure his own interest still at his expense. He was resolved to lay these persons under such obligations, and to show them so much kindness that they could not well refuse to return the kindness to him and give him a support. We may learn here, 1. That one sin leads to another, and that one act of dishonesty will be followed by many more if there is opportunity. 2. Men who commit one sin cannot get along consistently without committing many more. One lie will demand many more to make it appear like the truth, and one act of cheating will demand many more to avoid detection. The beginning of sin is like the letting out of waters, and no man knows, if he indulges in one sin where it will end. 3. Sinners are selfish. They care more about themselves than they do either about God or truth. If they seek salvation, it is only for selfish ends, and because they desire a comfortable abode rather than because they have any regard to God or his cause.

5. *Called every one.* As he was steward, he had the management of all the affairs, and of course debts were to be paid to him. ¶ *Debtors.* Those who owed his master, or perhaps tenants; those who rented land of his master.

6. *A hundred measures.* The measure here mentioned is the bath, which contained, according to Dr. Arbuthnot's tables, seven gallons and a half—or according to the marginal Note, about nine gallons and three quarts. ¶ *Oil.*

to him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred <sup>2</sup> measures of wheat. And he said unto him,

<sup>2</sup> The word here interpreted a *measure*, in the original containeth about 14 bushels and a pottle.

Oil of olives, or sweet oil. It was much used for lamps; as an article of food, *Ex.* xxix. 2; and also for anointing, and of course as an article of commerce, 1 *Kings* v. 11. These were persons, doubtless, who had rented land of the rich man, and who were to give him a certain proportion of the produce. ¶ *Thy bill.* The contract, or obligation, or lease. It was probably written as a promise by the debtor, and signed by the steward, and thus became binding. Thus he had power to alter it without supposing that his master would detect it. The bill or contract was in the hands of the steward, and he gave it back to him to write a new one. ¶ *Quickly.* He supposed that his master would soon remove him, and he was therefore in haste to have all things secure beforehand. It is worthy of remark, also, that all this was wrong. His master had called for the account; but instead of rendering it, he engaged in other business, disobeyed his lord still, and in contempt of his commands sought his own interest. All sinners would be slow to give in their account to God if they could do it; and it is only because, when God calls them by death, they cannot but go, that they do not engage still in their own business, and disobey him.

7. *Measures of wheat.* The measure here mentioned—the kor, or homer, contained, according to the tables of Dr. Arbuthnot, about thirty-two pecks, or eight bushels; or, according to the marginal Note, about fourteen bushels and a pottle. A pottle is four pints. The Hebrew kor, כֹּר—or homer, הֹמֶר was equal to ten baths, or seventy gallons; and the actual amount of the measure according to this was not far from eight gallons. Robinson, (*Lex.*) however, supposes that the bath was eleven and a half gallons, and the kor or homer 14.45 bushels. The amount is not material to the proper un-



Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the <sup>1</sup> children of light.

<sup>1</sup> John xii. 36. Eph. v. 8.

derstanding of the parable. ¶ *Fourscore*. Eighty.

8. *The lord commended*. Praised, or expressed admiration at his wisdom. These are not the words of Jesus, as commending him, but a part of the narrative or parable. His master commended him, saw that he was wise and considerate, though he was dishonest. ¶ *The unjust steward*. It is not said that his master commended him because he was unjust, but because he was wise. This is the only thing in his conduct of which there is any approbation expressed, and this approbation was expressed by his master. This passage cannot be brought, therefore, to prove that Jesus meant to commend his dishonesty. It was the commendation expressed of his cunning or forethought; and the master could no more approve this conduct than he could approve the first act of cheating. ¶ *The children of this world*. Those who are devoted to this world, who live for this world only, and who are careful only to obtain property, and to provide for their temporal necessities. It does not mean that they are peculiarly wicked and profligate, but only that they are worldly, and anxious about earthly things. See Matt. xiii. 22; 2 Tim. iv. 10. ¶ *Are wiser*. More prudent, cunning, and anxious about their particular business. They show more skill, study more plans, contrive more ways to provide for themselves, than the children of light do to promote the interests of religion. ¶ *In their generation*. Some have thought this means, in their manner of living, or in managing their affairs. The word *generation* sometimes means manner of life. Gen. vi. 9; xxxvii. 2. Others suppose that it means towards, or among, the men of their own age. They are more prudent and wise than Christians in regard to the people of their own time; they turn their connexion with them to good account, and make it subserve their worldly interests, while Christians fail

9 And I say unto you, Make <sup>2</sup> to yourselves friends of the <sup>3</sup> mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

<sup>2</sup> Ecc. xi. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. <sup>3</sup> Or, riches. Prov. xxiii. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 17.

much more to use the world in such a manner as to subserve their spiritual interests. ¶ *Children of light*. Those who have been enlightened from above—who are Christians. This may be considered as the application of the parable. It does not mean that it is more wise to be a worldly man than to be a child of light, but that those who are worldly show much prudence in providing for themselves; seize occasions for making good bargains; are active and industrious; try to turn every thing to the best account, and thus exert themselves to the utmost to advance their interests; while Christians often suffer opportunities of doing good to pass unimproved; are less steady, firm, and anxious, about eternal things; and thus show less wisdom. Alas! this is too true; and we cannot but reflect here how different the world would be if all Christians were as anxious, and diligent, and prudent, in religious matters, as others are in worldly things.

9. *I say unto you*. I, Jesus, say to you my disciples. ¶ *Make to yourselves friends*. Some have understood the word *friends*, here, as referring to the poor; others, to holy angels; and others, to God. Perhaps, however, the word should not be considered as referring to any particular persons, but is used in accordance with the preceding parable; for in the application our Saviour uses the language appropriated to the conduct of the steward to express the general truth that we are to make a proper use of riches. The steward had so managed his pecuniary affairs, as to secure future comfort for himself; or so as to find friends that would take care of him beyond the time when he was put out of the office. That is, he would not be destitute, or cast off, or without comfort, when he was removed from his office. So, says our Saviour to the publicans, and those who had property, so use it as to secure happiness and comfort beyond the time when you shall be removed from the

10 He <sup>1</sup> that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 17. Matt. xxv. 21, 23. Heb. iii. 2.

present life. Have a reference, in the use of your money, to the future. Do not use it so that it shall not avail you any thing hereafter; but so employ it that, as the steward found friends, comfort, and a home, by his wisdom in the use of it, so you may after you are removed, find friends, comfort, and a home—that is, may be happy in heaven. Jesus, here, does not say that we should do it in the same way that the steward did, for that was unjust; but only that we should secure the result. This may be done by using our riches as we should do; that is, by not suffering them to entangle us in cares and perplexities dangerous to the soul, engrossing the time, and stealing away the affections, by employing them in works of mercy and benevolence, aiding the poor, contributing to the advance of the gospel, bestowing them where they will do good, and in such a manner that God will approve the deed, and will bless us for it. Commonly, riches are a hindrance to piety. To many, they are snares; and instead of positively benefiting the possessor, they are an injury, as they engross the time, the affections, and do not contribute at all to the eternal welfare of the soul. Every thing may, by a proper use, be made to contribute to our welfare in heaven. Health, wealth, talents, and influence may be so employed; and this is what our Saviour doubtless means here. ¶ *Of the mammon.* By means of the mammon. ¶ *Mammon.* A Syriac word meaning riches. It is used also as an idol, the god of riches. ¶ *Of unrighteousness.* These words are a Hebrew expression for unrighteous mammon—the noun being used for an adjective, as is common in the New Testament. The word *unrighteous*, here stands opposed to *the true riches*, in ver. 11, and means deceitful, false, not to be trusted. It has this meaning often. See Matt. vi. 19; xix. 21. Luke xii. 33. 1 Tim. vi. 17. It does not signify, therefore, that they had acquired the property unjustly, but that property was deceitful, and not to be trusted. The wealth of the steward was

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous <sup>2</sup> mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? <sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Or, *riches.* <sup>3</sup> Ch. xii. 33. Prov. viii. 18, 19. Eph. iii. 8.

deceitful; he could not rely on its continuance; it was liable to be taken away at any moment. So the wealth of the world is deceitful. We cannot calculate on its continuance. It may give us support or comfort now, but it may be soon removed, or we taken from it; and we should, therefore, so use it as to derive benefit from it hereafter. ¶ *When ye fail.* When ye are left, or when ye die. The expression is accommodated to the discharge of the steward; but it refers to death, as if God then discharged his people, or took them from their stewardship, and called them to account. ¶ *They may receive you.* This is a form of expression denoting merely that you may be received. The plural form is used because it was used in the corresponding place in the parable. Ver. 4. The direction is, so to use our worldly goods that we may be received into heaven when we die. God will receive us there, and we are to employ our property so that he will not cast us off for abusing it. ¶ *Everlasting habitations.* Heaven, the eternal home of the righteous, where all these wants will be supplied, and there can be no more anxiety, and no more removal from enjoyments. 2 Cor. v. 1.

10. *He that is faithful, &c.* This is a maxim that will almost universally hold true. A man that shows fidelity in small matters will show it also in large; and he that will cheat and defraud in small things will cheat also in those of more trust and responsibility. Fidelity is required in small matters as well as in those of more importance.

11. *Who will commit, &c.* If you are not faithful in the small matters pertaining to this world, if you do not use aright your property and influence, you cannot expect that God will commit to you the true riches of his grace. Men who are dishonest, and worldly, and who do not employ the deceitful mammon as they ought, cannot expect to grow in grace. God does not confer grace upon them, and their being unfaithful in earthly matters

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 ¶ No<sup>1</sup> servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees also, who<sup>2</sup> were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

<sup>1</sup> Josh. xxiv. 15. Matt. vi. 24. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiii. 14.

is evidence that they would be unfaithful in much greater affairs, and would likewise misimprove the true riches. ¶ *True riches.* The graces of the gospel; the influences of the Spirit; eternal life, or religion. The riches of this world are false, deceitful, not to be trusted, ver. 9; the treasures of heaven are true, faithful, never failing. Matt. vi. 19, 20.

12. *Another man's.* The word man's is not in the original. It is, 'If ye have been unfaithful managers for another.' It refers, doubtless, to God. The wealth of the Lord is his. It is committed to us as his stewards. It is uncertain and deceitful, and at any moment he can take it away from us. It is still his; and if, while entrusted with this, we are unfaithful, we cannot expect that he will confer on us the rewards of heaven. ¶ *That which is your own.* The riches of heaven, which, if once given to us, may be considered as ours—i. e., it will be permanent and fixed, and will not be taken away as if at the pleasure of another. We may calculate on it, and look forward with the assurance that it will continue to be ours for ever, and not be taken away like the riches of this world, as if they were not ours. The meaning of the whole *parable* is, therefore, thus expressed: If we do not use the things of this world as we ought, with honesty, truth, wisdom, and integrity, we cannot have evidence of piety, and shall not be received into heaven. If we are true to that which is least, it is an evidence that we are the children of God, and he will commit to our trust that which is of infinite importance, even the eternal riches and glory of heaven.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves<sup>3</sup> before men; but God<sup>4</sup> knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed<sup>5</sup> among men is abomination in the sight of God.

16 The<sup>6</sup> law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

17 And<sup>7</sup> it is easier for heaven

<sup>3</sup> Ch. x. 29. <sup>4</sup> Psa. vii. 9. Jer. xvii. 10. <sup>5</sup> Prov. xvi. 5. Mal. iii. 15. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xi. 12, 13. <sup>7</sup> Psa. cii. 28. Isa. xl. 8; ii. 6.

13. See Matt. vi. 24.

14, 15. *They derided him.* They ridiculed, or laughed at him. They were avaricious, and they ridiculed the doctrine that they ought to be benevolent with their property. ¶ *Justify yourselves.* Attempt to appear just, or, you aim at external righteousness, or to appear righteous in the sight of men, and do not regard the heart. ¶ *That which is highly esteemed.* That is, mere external works, or actions performed merely to appear to be righteous. ¶ *Is abomination.* Is abominable, or hateful. The word used here is the one that in the Old Testament is commonly given to idols, and denotes God's abhorrence of such conduct. These words are to be applied chiefly to what Jesus was discoursing about. There are many things esteemed among men which are not abomination in the sight of God; as, e. g., truth, parental and filial affection, industry, &c. But many things, much sought and admired, are hateful in his sight. The love of wealth and show, ambition and pride, gay and splendid vices, and all the wickedness that men contrive to gild and to make appear like virtue, external acts, that appear well while the heart is evil, are abominable in the sight of God, and should be in the sight of men. Compare 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Luke xviii. 11—14;

16. See Matt. xi. 12—14. ¶ *Every man.* Many men, or multitudes. It is an expression that is very common, as when we say everybody is engaged in a piece of business, meaning that it occupies general attention.

17. See Matt. v. 18.

and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

18 Whosoever <sup>1</sup> putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

19 ¶ There was a certain rich

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 32. 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

18. See Matt. v. 32. These verses occur in Matthew in a different order, and it is not improbable that they were spoken by our Saviour at different times. The design, here, seems to be to reprove the Pharisees for not observing the law of Moses, notwithstanding their great pretensions to external righteousness, and to show them that they had really departed from the law.

19. *There was a certain rich man.* Many have supposed that our Lord here refers to a real history, and gives an account of some man who had lived in this manner. But of this there is no evidence. The probability is, that this narrative is to be considered as a parable, referring not to any particular case which had actually happened, but teaching that such cases might happen. The design of the narrative is to be collected from the previous conversation. He had taught the danger of love of money, ver. 1, 2; the deceitful and treacherous nature of riches, ver. 9—11; that what was in high esteem on earth was hateful to God, ver. 15; that men who did not use their property aright could not be received into heaven, ver. 11, 12, that they ought to listen to Moses and the prophets, ver. 16, 17; and that it was the duty of men to show kindness to the poor. The design of the parable was, to impress all these truths more vividly on the mind, and to show the Pharisees that with all their boasted righteousness, and external correctness of character, they might be lost amidst all their wealth. Accordingly he speaks of no great fault in the rich man, no external degrading vice, no open breach of the law, and leaves us to infer that the mere possession of wealth is dangerous to the soul; and that a man, surrounded with every temporal blessing, may perish for ever. It is remarkable

man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: <sup>2</sup>

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, <sup>3</sup>

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich

<sup>2</sup> Job xxi. 11—15. Psa. lxxiii. 3—7. Am. vi. 4—6. <sup>3</sup> Job ii. 7. Psa. xxxiv. 19; lxxiii. 14.

that he gave no name to this rich man. If this was a parable, it shows us how unwilling he was to fix suspicion on any one. If it was not a parable, it shows also that Jesus would not drag out wicked men before the public, but would conceal as much as possible all that had any connexion with them. The good he would speak well of by name; the evil he would not injure by exposing them to public view. ¶ *Clothed in purple.* A purple robe or garment. This colour was expensive as well as splendid, and was chiefly worn by princes, nobles, and those who were very wealthy. Compare Matt. xxvii. 28. See Notes on Isa. i. 18. ¶ *Fine linen.* This linen was chiefly produced from the flax that grew on the banks of the Nile, in Egypt. Prov. vii. 16. Ezek. xxvii. 7. It was peculiarly soft and white, and was therefore much sought as an article of luxury, and was so expensive that it could be worn only by princes, by priests, or by those who were very rich. Gen. xli. 42. Exod. xxviii. 5. 1 Chron. xv. 27. ¶ *Fared sumptuously.* Feasted or lived in a splendid manner. ¶ *Every day.* Not merely occasionally, but constantly. This was a mark of great wealth, and in the view of the world, evidence of great happiness. It is worthy of remark that Jesus did not charge on him any crimes. He did not say that he had acquired this property by dishonesty, or even that he was unkind or uncharitable, but simply that he was a rich man, and that his riches did not secure him from death and perdition.

20, 21. *Beggar.* Poor man. The original word does not mean beggar, but simply that he was poor. It should have been so translated to keep up the contrast with the rich man. ¶ *Named Lazarus.* The word *Lazarus* is Hebrew, and means

man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bo-

a man destitute of help, a needy, poor man. It is a name given, therefore, to denote his needy condition. ¶ *Laid at his gate.* At the door of the rich man, in order that he might obtain aid. ¶ *Full of sores.* Covered with ulcers; afflicted not only with poverty, but with loathsome and offensive ulcers, such as often are the accompaniments of poverty and want. These circumstances are designed to show how different was his condition from that of the rich man. He was clothed in purple; the poor man was covered with sores: he fared sumptuously; the poor man was dependent even for the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. ¶ *The dogs came.* Such was his miserable condition that even the dogs, as if moved by pity, came and licked his sores in kindness to him. These circumstances of his misery are very touching, and his condition, contrasted with that of the rich man, very striking. It is not affirmed that the rich man was unkind to him, or drove him away, or refused to aid him. The narrative is designed simply to show that the possession of wealth, and all the blessings of this life, could not exempt from death and misery, and that the lowest condition among mortals may be connected with life and happiness beyond the grave. There was no provision made for the helpless poor in those days, and consequently they were often laid at the gates of the rich and in places of public resort for charity. See Acts iii. 2. The gospel has been the means of all the public charity now made for the needy, as it has of providing hospitals for those who are sick and afflicted. No pagan nation ever had a hospital or an alms-house for the needy, the aged, or the afflicted.\* Many heathen nations, as the Hindoos and the Sandwich islanders, destroyed their aged people; and all left their poor to the miseries of public begging, and their sick to the care of their friends or to private charity.

22. *Was carried by the angels.* The Jews held the opinion that the spirits of

\* This statement is perhaps open to some question. There have long been hospitals in China. —*Editor.*

dom. <sup>1</sup> the <sup>2</sup> rich man also died, and was buried.

23 And <sup>3</sup> in hell he lift up his

<sup>1</sup> Matt. viii. 11. <sup>2</sup> Prov. xiv. 32. <sup>3</sup> Ps. lx. 17. Prov. v. 5. Rev. xiv. 10, 11; xx. 13, 14.

the righteous were conveyed by angels to heaven at their death. Our Saviour speaks in accordance with this opinion; and as he expressly affirms the fact, it seems as proper that it should be taken literally, as when it is said that the rich man died and was buried. Angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation, Heb. i. 14, and there is no more improbability in the supposition that they attend departing spirits to heaven, than that they attend them while on earth. ¶ *Abraham's bosom.* This is a phrase taken from the practice of reclining at meals, where the head of one lay on the bosom of another, and it denoted, therefore, intimacy and friendship. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6. Also John xiii. 23; xxi. 20. The Jews had no doubt that Abraham was in paradise. To say that Lazarus was in his bosom was, therefore, the same as to say that he was admitted to heaven and made happy there. The Jews, moreover, boasted very much of being the friends of Abraham and his descendants. Matt. iii. 9. To be his friend, was in their view the highest honour and happiness. Our Saviour, therefore, showed them that this poor and afflicted man might be raised to the highest happiness, while the rich, who prided themselves on their being descended from Abraham, might be cast away and lost for ever. ¶ *Was buried.* This is not said of the poor man. Burial was thought to be an honour, and funerals were, as they are now, often expensive, splendid, and ostentatious. This is said of the rich man to show that he had every earthly honour, and all that the world calls happy and desirable.

23. *In hell.* The word here translated *hell* (*Hades*), means literally a dark, obscure place; the place where departed spirits go, but especially the place where wicked spirits go. The following circumstances are related of it in this parable: 1. It is far off from the abodes of the righteous. Lazarus was seen afar off. 2. It is a place of torment. 3. There is a great gulf fixed between that and hea-

eyes, being in torments,<sup>1</sup> and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 28. Rev. xiv. 10, 11.

ven. Ver. 26. 4. The suffering is great. It is represented by torment in a flame. Ver. 24. 5. There will be no escape from it. Ver. 26. The word *hell* here means, therefore, that dark, obscure, and miserable place, far from heaven, where the wicked shall be punished for ever. ¶ *He lifted up his eyes.* A phrase in common use among the Hebrews, meaning he looked. Gen. xiii. 10; xviii. 2; xxxi. 10. Dan. viii. 3. Luke vi. 20. ¶ *Being in torments.* The word *torment* means pain, anguish, Matt. iv. 24, particularly the pain inflicted by the ancients in order to induce men to make confession of their crimes. These torments or tortures were the keenest that they could inflict, such as the rack, or scourging, or burning; and the use of the word here denotes that the sufferings of the wicked can be represented only by the extreme forms of human suffering. ¶ *And seeth Abraham, &c.* This was an aggravation of his misery. One of the first things that occurred in hell was to look up and see the poor man that lay at his gate, completely happy. What a contrast! Just now he was rolling in wealth, and the poor man was at his gate: he had no expectation of these sufferings; now they have come upon him, and Lazarus is happy, and for ever fixed in the paradise of God. It is more, perhaps, than we are authorized to infer, that the wicked will see those who are in paradise. That they will know that they are there is certain; but we are not to suppose that they will be so near together as to be seen, or as to make conversation possible. These circumstances mean that there will be a separation, and that the wicked in hell will be conscious that the righteous, though on earth they were poor or despised, will be in heaven. Heaven and hell will be far from each other, and it will be no small part of the misery of the one that it is far and for ever removed from the other.

24. *Father Abraham.* The Jews considered it a signal honour that Abraham was their father; that is, that they were descendants from him. Though this man

24 And he cried and said, <sup>a</sup> Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip

<sup>a</sup> Matt. iii. 2. John viii. 33—36, 53—56. Rom. iv. 12; ix. 7, 8.

was now in misery, yet he seems not to have abandoned the idea of his relation to the father of the faithful. The Jews supposed that departed spirits might know and converse with each other. See Lightfoot on this place. Our Saviour speaks in conformity with that prevailing opinion; and as it was not easy to convey ideas about the spiritual world without some such representation, he therefore speaks in the language which was usual in his time. We are not, however, to suppose that this was literally true, but only that it was designed to represent more clearly the sufferings of the rich man in hell. ¶ *Have mercy on me.* Pity me. The rich man is not represented as calling on God. The mercy of God will be at an end when the soul is lost. Nor did he ask to be released from that place. Lost spirits know that their sufferings will have no end, and that it would be in vain to ask to escape the place of torment. Nor does he ask to be admitted where Lazarus was. He had no desire to be in a holy place, and he well knew that there was no restoration to those who once sink down to hell. ¶ *Send Lazarus.* This shows how low he was reduced, and how the circumstances of men change when they die. Just before, Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores. Now he is happy, in heaven. Just before, he had nothing to give, and the rich man could expect to derive no benefit from him; now he asks, as the highest favour, that he might come and render him relief. Soon the poorest men on earth, if they are the friends of God, will have mercies which the rich, if unprepared to die, can never obtain. The rich will no longer despise them; they would then be glad of their friendship, and would beg for the slightest favour at their hands. ¶ *Dip the tip, &c.* This was a small favour to ask, and it shows the greatness of his distress, when so small a thing would be considered a great relief. ¶ *Cool my tongue.* The effect of great heat on the body is to produce almost insupportable thirst. Those who travel in burning

the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; <sup>1</sup> for I am tormented in this flame.<sup>2</sup>

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime <sup>3</sup> receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiv. 12. <sup>2</sup> Isa. lxvi. 24. Mark ix. 44-48. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vi. 24. Job xxi. 13. Psa. lxxiii. 12-19.

deserts thus suffer inexpressibly when they are deprived of water. So pain of any kind produces thirst, and particularly if connected with fever. The sufferings of the rich man are, therefore, represented as producing burning thirst, so much that even a drop of water would be refreshing to his tongue. We can scarce form an idea of more distress and misery, than where this is continued from one day to another without relief. We are not to suppose that he had been guilty of any particular wickedness with his tongue as the cause of this. It is simply an idea to represent the natural effect of great suffering, and especially suffering in the midst of great heat. ¶ *I am tormented.* I am in anguish, in insupportable distress. ¶ *In this flame.* The lost are often represented as suffering in flames, because fire is an image of the severest pain that we know. It is not certain, however, that the wicked will be doomed to suffer in material fire. See Note, Mark ix. 44.

25. *Son.* This is a representation designed to correspond with the word father. He was a descendant from Abraham—a Jew, and Abraham is represented as calling this thing to his remembrance. It would not lessen his sorrows to remember that he was a son of Abraham, and that he ought to have lived worthy of that relation to him. ¶ *Remember.* This is a cutting word in this place. One of the chief torments of hell will be the remembrance of what was enjoyed, and of what was done in this world. Nor will it be any mitigation of the suffering, to spend an eternity in which there will be nothing else to do day or night but to remember what was done, and what might have been if the life had been right. ¶ *Thy good things.* That is, property, splendour, honour. ¶ *Evil things.* Poverty, contempt, and affliction. ¶ But now, &c.

now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither <sup>4</sup> can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

<sup>4</sup> Psa. i. 22. Ezek. xviii. 24. Matt. xxv. 46. John iii. 36. Rev. xxii. 11.

How changed the scene! How different the condition! And how much better was the portion of Lazarus after all than that of the rich man! It is probable that Lazarus had the most real happiness in the land of the living, for riches without the love of God can never confer happiness like the favour of God, even in poverty. But the comforts of the rich man are now gone for ever, and the joys of Lazarus have just commenced. One is to be comforted, and the other to be tormented, to all eternity. How much better, therefore, is poverty, with the friendship of God, than riches, with all that the world can bestow! And how foolish to seek our chief pleasures only in this life.

26. *A great gulf.* The word translated *gulf* means chasm, or the broad, yawning space between two elevated objects, or two precipices. In this place it means that there is no way of passing from one to the other. ¶ *Fixed.* Strengthened, made firm, or immovable. It is so established that it will neither be moveable nor passable. It will for ever divide heaven and hell. ¶ *Which would pass.* We are not to press this passage literally, as if those in heaven would desire to go and visit the wicked in the world of woe. The simple meaning of the statement is, that there can be no communication between the one and the other, there can be no passing from one to the other. It is impossible to conceive that the righteous would desire to leave their abodes in glory to go and dwell in the world of woe, nor can we suppose that they would wish to go for any reason unless it were possible to furnish relief. That will be out of the question. Not even a drop of water will be furnished as a relief to the sufferer. ¶ *Neither can they pass to us, &c.* There can be no doubt that the wicked will desire to pass the gulf that divides them from hea-

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

ven. They would be glad to be in a state of happiness. But all such wishes will be vain. How can men believe that there will be a restoration of all the wicked to heaven? The Saviour solemnly assures us that there can be no passage from that world of woe to the abodes of the blessed. Yet in the face of this, many Universalists hold that hell will yet be vacated of its guilty millions, and all its miserable inhabitants will be received to heaven. Who shall conduct them across this gulf, when Jesus Christ says it cannot be passed? Who shall build a bridge over that yawning chasm which he says is fixed? No. If there is any thing certain from the Scripture, it is, that they who enter hell return no more, they who sink there sink for ever.

27, 28. *Five brethren.* The number five is mentioned merely to preserve the appearance of the verisimilitude in the story. It is not to be spiritualized, nor are we to suppose that it has any hidden or inscrutable meaning. ¶ *May testify unto them.* May bear witness to them, or may inform them of what is my situation, and the dreadful consequences of the life that I have led. It is remarkable that he did not ask to go himself. He knew that he could not be released, even for so short a time. His condition was fixed. Yet he had no wish that his friends should suffer also, and he supposed that if one went from the dead they would hear him.

29. *Moses.* The writings of Moses. The first five books of the Bible. ¶ *The prophets.* The remainder of the Old Testament. What the prophets had written. ¶ *Hear them.* Hear them speak in the scriptures. Read them, or hear them read in the synagogues, and attend to what they have delivered.

30. *Nay.* No. They will not hear Moses and the prophets. They have heard them so long in vain, and there is no prospect now that they will attend to the

29 Abraham saith unto him, They ' have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

1 Isa. xxxiv. 16. John v. 39.

message. But if one should go to them directly from eternity, they will hear him. The novelty of the message would attract their attention, and they would listen to what he would say.

31. *Be persuaded.* Be convinced 'of the truth, and of the danger and folly of their way, and the certainty of their suffering hereafter, and be induced to turn from sin to holiness, and from Satan unto God.

From this impressive and instructive parable we may learn:—

I. That the souls of men do not die with their bodies.

II. That the souls of men are conscious after death; that they do not sleep, as some have supposed, till the morning of the resurrection.

III. That the righteous are taken to a place of happiness immediately at death, and the wicked consigned to misery.

IV. That wealth does not secure from death.

“How vain are riches to secure  
Their haughty owners from the grave!”

The rich, the beautiful, the gay, as well as the poor, go down to the grave. All their pomp and apparel, all their honours, their palaces, and their gold cannot save them. Death can as easily find his way into the splendid mansions of the rich as into the cottages of the poor; and the rich shall turn to the same corruption, and soon, like the poor, be undistinguished from common dust, and be unknown.

V. We should not envy the condition of the rich.

“On slippery rocks I see them stand,  
And fiery billows roll below.

“Now let them boast how tall they rise:  
I'll never envy them again;  
There they may stand with haughty eyes,  
Till they plunge deep in endless pain.

“Their fancied joys how fast they flee,  
Like dreams, as fleeting and as vain;  
Their songs of softest harmony  
Are but a prelude to their pain.”



81 And he said unto him, If <sup>1</sup> they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will <sup>2</sup> they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

## CHAPTER XVII.

*Offences to be avoided, 1, 2. Forgiveness taught, 3, 4. Power of faith, 5, 6. Services to God not meritorious, 7—10. The ten lepers, 11—19. The kingdom of God comes without observation, 20—23. Watchfulness, 24—37.*

**T**HEN said he unto the disciples, It <sup>3</sup> is impossible but that

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 3. <sup>2</sup> John xii. 10, 11. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xviii. 6, 7. Mark ix. 42.

VI. We should strive for a better inheritance than can be possessed in this life.

"Now I esteem their mirth and wine  
Too dear to purchase with my blood :  
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine—  
My life, my portion, and my God."

VII. The sufferings of the wicked in hell will be indescribably great. Think what is represented by torment, by burning flame, by insupportable thirst, by that state where a single drop of water would afford relief. Remember that all this is but a representation of the pains of the damned, and that this will have no intermission, day or night, but will continue from year to year, and age to age, without any end, and you have a faint view of the sufferings of those who are in hell.

VIII. There is a place of suffering beyond the grave, a hell. If there is not, then this parable has no meaning. It is impossible to make any thing of it, unless it be designed to teach that.

IX. There will never be any escape from those gloomy regions. There is a gulph fixed, fixed, not moveable. Nor can any of the damned beat a pathway across this gulph to the world of holiness.

X. We see the amazing folly of those who suppose there may be an end to the sufferings of the wicked, and who, on that supposition, seem willing to go down to hell to suffer a long time, rather than go at once to heaven. If man were to suffer but a thousand years, or even one year, why should he be so foolish as to choose *that* suffering, rather than go at once to

heaven, and be happy at once when he dies!

XI. God gives us warning sufficient to prepare for death. He has sent his word, his servants, his Son; he warns us by his Spirit and his providence, by the en-treaties of our friends, and by the death of sinners; he offers us heaven, and he threatens hell. If all this will not move sinners, what would do it! There is nothing that would.

XII. God will give us nothing further to warn us. No dead man will come to life to tell us of what he has seen. If he did, we would not believe him. Religion appeals to men, not by ghosts and frightful apparitions. It appeals to their reason, their conscience, their hopes, and their fears. It sets life and death soberly before men, and if they will not choose the former, they must die. If you will not hear the Son of God, and the truth of the scriptures, there is nothing which you will or can hear; you will never be persuaded, and will never escape the place of torment.

3 ¶ Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke <sup>4</sup> him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xix. 17.

## CHAPTER XVII.

1, 2. *It is impossible.* It cannot but happen. Such is the state of things that it will be. See these verses explained in Matt. xviii. 6, 7.

3, 4. See Matt. xviii. 15, 21, 22. *Tre-pass against thee.* Sin against thee, or does anything that gives you an offence, or does you an injury. ¶ *Rebuke.* Re-prove. Go and tell him his fault, and seek an explanation. Acquaint him with

hee, saying, I repent; thou <sup>1</sup> shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto he Lord, Increase <sup>2</sup> our faith.

6 And the Lord said, If <sup>3</sup> ye had sith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 12, 14. Col. iii. 13. <sup>2</sup> Heb. xii. 2. Matt. xvii. 20; xxi. 21. Mark ix. 23; xi. 23.

what has been the effect of his conduct, and the state of your feelings, that he may acknowledge his errors and repent.

5. *Increase our faith.* This duty of forgiving offences seemed so difficult to the disciples, that they felt the need strongly of an increase of faith; they felt that they were prone themselves to harbour resentments, and that it required an increase of true religion to enable them to comply with the requirements of Jesus. We may learn from this: 1. That Jesus had the power of increasing the faith of his people. Strength comes from him, and especially strength to believe the gospel. Hence he is called the Author and Finisher of our faith. Heb. xii. 2. 2. The duty of forgiving offences is one of the most difficult duties of the christian religion. It is so contrary to our natural feelings, and to proud, corrupt nature, applies such true nobleness of soul, and elevation above the petty feelings of man and revenge, and is so contrary to the vulgar maxims of the world, which teach to cherish the memory of offences, rather than to forgive, that it is no wonder that our Saviour dwells much on this duty, and strenuously insists on it in order to bring evidence that our hearts have been changed. Some have thought that our Saviour, that he would increase their reliance on the power of working faith, and especially to the case recorded in Matt. xvii. 16—20.

3. *Matt. xvii. 20. Sycamine-tree.* The sycamine, as well as sycamore, is given in the Bible sometimes called the fig-tree. But the tree here mentioned. The Latin Vulgate and some versions translate it mulberry-tree, said to have been a tree that grew in Egypt, of the size and shape of a mulberry-tree, but bearing fruit of figs. This tree was com-

mon in Palestine also. It is probable that our Lord was standing by one as he addressed these words to his disciples.

7 But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may

eat and drink. Hungry and weary he might be, yet it would be proper for him first to attend upon his master. So the apostles were not to be impatient because they did not at once receive the reward to which they were looking. ¶ *To eat.* Or rather, place thyself at the table.

7. *Having a servant, &c.* This parable seems to have been spoken with reference to the rewards which the disciples were expecting in the kingdom of the Messiah. The occasion on which it was spoken cannot be ascertained. It does not seem to have any particular connexion with what goes before. It may be supposed that the disciples were somewhat impatient to have the kingdom restored to Israel, Acts i. 6, that is, that their Master would assume his kingly power, and that they were impatient of the delay, and anxious to enter on the rewards which they expected, and which they not improbably were expecting in consequence of their devotedness to him. In answer to these expectations, Jesus spoke this parable, showing them, 1. That they should be rewarded, as a servant would be provided for. But, 2. That this was not the first thing; that there was a proper order of things, and thus it might be delayed, as a servant would be provided for at the proper time, and at the pleasure of the master. And, 3. That this reward was not to be expected as a matter of merit, but would be given at the good pleasure of God, for they were but unprofitable servants. ¶ *By and by.* This should have been translated *immediately*. He would not, as the first thing, or as soon as he returned from the field, direct him to eat and drink. ¶ *To meat.* To eat. Or rather, place thyself at the table.

8. *I may sup.* Make ready my supper.

sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are <sup>1</sup> unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, as he

<sup>1</sup> Job xxii. 3; xxxv. 7. Psa. xvi. 2, 3. Isa. lxiv. 6. Rom. xi. 35. 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17.

per. ¶ *Gird thyself.* See Note, Luke xii. 37.

9. *I trow not.* I think not; or I suppose not.

10. *Are unprofitable servants.* We have conferred no favour. We have merited nothing, and have not benefited God, or laid him under obligation. If he rewards us, it will be matter of unmerited favour. This is true in relation to Christians in the following respects: 1. Our services are not profitable to God, Job xxii. 2; he needs not our aid, and his essential happiness will not be increased by our efforts. 2. The grace to do his will comes from him only, and all the praise of that will be due to him. 3. All that we do, is what is our duty; we cannot lay claim to having rendered any service that will bind him to show us favour. And, 4. Our ~~best~~ services are mingled with imperfections. We come short of his glory, Rom. iii. 23; we do not serve him as humbly, and cheerfully, and faithfully as we ought; we are far, very far from the example set us by the Saviour, and if we are saved and rewarded, it will be because God will be merciful to our unrighteousness, and will remember our iniquities no more. Heb. viii. 12.

11. *The midst of Samaria and Galilee.* He went from Galilee, and probably travelled through the chief villages and towns in it, and then left it; and as Samaria was situated between Galilee and Jerusalem, it was necessary to pass through it. Or it may mean, that he passed along on the borders of each

went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria <sup>2</sup> and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar <sup>3</sup> off:

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go shew <sup>4</sup> your-

<sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 51, 52. John iv. 4. <sup>3</sup> Lev. xiii. 46. <sup>4</sup> Ch. v. 14. Lev. xiii. 2; xiv. 2. Matt. viii. 4.

towards the river Jordan, and so passed in the midst, i. e., between Galilee and Samaria. This is rendered more probable from the circumstance that as he went from Galilee, there would have been no occasion for saying that he passed through it, unless it be meant through the confines or borders of it, or at least it would have been mentioned before Samaria.

12. *There met him.* They were in his way, or they were in his path, as he was entering the village. They were not allowed to enter the village while they were afflicted with the leprosy. Lev. xiii. 46. Num. v. 2, 3. ¶ *Lepers.* See Note on Matt. viii. 2. ¶ *Stood afar off.* At a distance, as they were required by law. They were unclean, and it was not lawful for them to come near to those who were in health. As Jesus was travelling, they were also walking in the contrary way, and seeing him, and knowing that they were unclean, they stopped, or turned aside, so that they might not expose others to the contagion.

14. *Go shew yourselves, &c.* See Matt. viii. 4. By this command he gave them an implied assurance that they would be healed. For the design for which they were to go was to exhibit the evidence that they were restored, and to obtain permission from the priest to mingle again in society. It may also be observed that this required no small measure of faith on their part, for he did not first heal them, and then tell them to go; he told them to go without expressly assuring them that they would be healed and

selves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as <sup>1</sup> they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified <sup>2</sup> God,

16 And fell down on his face at

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. v. 14. Isa. lrv. 24. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxx. 1, 2.

without as yet any evidence to show to the priest. So sinners, defiled with the leprosy of sin, should put faith in the Lord Jesus, and obey his commands, with the fullest confidence that he is able to heal them, and that he will do it, if they follow his directions; and that in due time they shall have the fullest evidence that their peace is made with God, and that their souls shall by him be declared free from the defilement of sin. ¶ *Were cleansed.* Were cured, or made whole.

15, 16. *One of them, &c.* This man, sensible of the power of God, and grateful for his mercies, returned to express his gratitude to God for his goodness. Instead of obeying at once the letter of the command, he first expressed his thanks to God, and to his great benefactor. There is no evidence, however, that he did not, after he had given thanks to God, and had poured out his joy at the feet of Jesus, go to the priest as he was directed. Indeed he could not have been restored to society without doing it. But he first poured out his thanks to God, and gave him praise for his wonderful recovery. The first duty of sinners, after they have been forgiven, and have the hope of eternal life, is to prostrate themselves at the feet of their great Benefactor, and to consecrate themselves to his service. Then let them go and show to others the evidence that they are cleansed. Let them go and mingle, like the restored leper, with their families and friends, and show by the parity and holiness of their lives, how great is the mercy that has cleansed them.

¶ *He was a Samaritan.* See Note, Matt. x. 5. This rendered his conduct more remarkable and striking in the sight of the Jews. They considered the Samaritans as peculiarly wicked, and themselves as peculiarly holy. This example showed them, like the parable of the good Samaritan,

his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a <sup>3</sup> Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

18 There are not <sup>4</sup> found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

<sup>3</sup> John iv. 39—42. <sup>4</sup> Psa. l. 23; cvi. 13. Isa. xlii. 12. Rev. xlv. 7.

that in this they were mistaken. And one design of this seems to have been to break down the opposition between the Jews and Samaritans, and to bring the former to more charitable judgment respecting the latter.

17, 18. *Where are the nine?* Jesus had commanded them to go to the priest; and they were probably literally obeying the commandment. They were impatient to be healed, and selfish in wishing it, and had no gratitude to God, or their benefactor. Jesus did not forbid their expressing gratitude to him for his mercy. He rather seems to reprove them for not doing it. One of the first feelings of the sinner cleansed from sin, is a desire to praise his great Benefactor. And a real willingness to obey his commandments is not inconsistent with a wish to render thanks to him for his mercy. With what singular propriety may this question now be asked, *where are the nine?* And what a striking illustration is this of human nature, and of the ingratitude of men! One had come back to give thanks for the favour bestowed on him; the others were heard of no more. So now. When men are restored from dangerous sickness, here and there one comes to give thanks to God, but where are the nine? When men are defended from danger, when they are recovered from the perils of the sea, when a steamboat is destroyed, and a large part of crew and passengers perish, here and there one of those who are saved acknowledges the goodness of God, and renders him praise. But where are the mass of them? They give no thanks; they offer no praise. They go about their usual employments, to mingle in the scenes of pleasure and sin, as if nothing had occurred. Few, few of all who have been rescued from threatening graves feel their obligation to God, or ever express it.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy<sup>1</sup> faith hath made thee whole.

20 ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 22.

They forget their great Benefactor; perhaps the mention of his name is unpleasant, and they scorn the idea that they are under any obligations to God. Such, alas, is man, ungrateful man. ¶ *This stranger.* This foreigner, or rather this alien, or this man of another tribe. In the Syriac version "this one who is of a foreign people." This man who might have been least expected to express this gratitude to God. The most unlikely characters are often found to be most consistent, and grateful. Men from whom we would expect least in religion, are often so entirely changed as to disappoint all our expectations, and to put to shame those who have been most highly favoured. The poor often thus put to shame the rich; the ignorant the learned; and even the young the aged.

19. *Go thy way.* To the priest, for without his certificate he could not again be restored to the society of his friends, or the public worship of God. Having now appropriately expressed your gratitude, go to the priest, and obey the law of God. Renewed sinners, while their hearts overflow with gratitude to Jesus, should express that gratitude by obeying God, and engaging in the appropriate duties of their calling, and of religion.

20. *Was demanded.* Was asked. ¶ *Of the Pharisees.* This was a matter of much importance to them, and they had taught that it would come with parade and pomp. It is not unlikely that they asked this merely in contempt, and for the purpose of drawing out something that should expose him to ridicule. ¶ *The kingdom of God.* The reign of God; or the dispensation under the Messiah. See Note, Matt. iii. 2. ¶ *With observation.* With scrupulous and attentive looking for it. Or with such an appearance as to attract observation, that is, with great pomp, majesty, splendour. He did not deny that, according to their views, the time was drawing near; but he denied that it

answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh<sup>2</sup> not with observation:

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the<sup>3</sup> kingdom of God is<sup>4</sup> within you.

<sup>2</sup> Or, with outward show.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xiv. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Or, among you. John i. 26.

would come in the manner in which they expected. The Messiah would not come with pomp, like an earthly prince; perhaps not in such a manner as to be discerned by the eyes of sagacious and artful men, who were expecting him in a way agreeable to their own feelings. The kingdom of God is within men, and it makes its way not by pomp and noise, but by silence, decency, and order. 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

21. *Lo here! or, lo there!* When an earthly prince visits different parts of his territories, he does it with much pomp. His movements attract much observation, and become the common topic of conversation. The inquiry is, Where is he! Which way will he go! And it is a matter of important news to be able to say where he is. Jesus says that the Messiah would not come in that manner. It would not be with such pomp, and conversation. It would be silent, obscure, and attracting comparatively little notice. Or the passage may have reference to the custom of the pretended Messiahs, who appeared in this manner. They said that in this place, or in that; in this mountain, or that desert, they would show signs that should convince the people that they were the Messiah. Compare Notes on Acts v. 36, 37. ¶ *Is within you.* This is capable of two interpretations. 1. The reign of God is in the heart and mind. It does not come with pomp and splendour, like the reign of temporal kings, merely to control the external actions and strike the senses of men with awe, but it reigns in the heart by the law of God; it sets up its dominion over the passions, and brings every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2. It may mean the new dispensation is even now among you. The Messiah has come. John has ushered in the kingdom of God; and you are not to expect the appearance of the Messiah with great pomp and splendour, for he is now among you. Most

22 And he said unto the disciples, The <sup>1</sup> days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

23 And <sup>2</sup> they shall say to you, See here; or, See there: go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25 But <sup>3</sup> first must he suffer

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 15. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xxi. 8. Matt. xxiv. 23—27. Mark xiii. 21. <sup>3</sup> Ch. ix. 22. Mark viii. 31.

critics at present incline to this latter interpretation. The ancient versions chiefly follow the former.

22. *The days will come.* He here takes occasion to direct the minds of his disciples to the days of vengeance which were about to fall on the Jewish nation. Heavy and calamitous days shall befall the Jewish people, and you will desire a deliverer. ¶ *Ye shall desire.* You who are now my professed followers. Who now number yourselves among my disciples. ¶ *One of the days of the Son of man.* The Son of man here means the Messiah, without affirming that he was the Messiah. Such shall be the calamities of those times; so great shall be the afflictions and persecutions, that you will greatly desire a deliverer, one who shall come to you in the character in which you have expected the Messiah would come, and who should deliver you from the power of your enemies. And at that time in the midst of these calamities, men shall rise up pretending to be the Messiah, and to be able to deliver you. In view of this, he takes occasion to caution them against being led astray by them. ¶ *Ye shall not see it.* Ye shall not see such a day of deliverance, such a Messiah as the nation has expected, and such an interposition as you would desire.

23, 24. *And they shall say, &c.* Many false Christs, according to Josephus, appeared about that time, attempting to lead away the people. See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 23—27.

many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26 And as it was <sup>4</sup> in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

<sup>4</sup> Gen. vii. 11, 23. Job xxii. 15—18. Heb. xl. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. 2 Pet. ii. 5; iii. 6.

25. See Note, Matt. xvi. 31.

26, 27. See Note, Matt. xxiv. 37—39.

28—30. *They did eat, &c.* They were busy in the affairs of this life, as if nothing were about to happen. ¶ *The same day, &c.* See Gen. xix. 23—25. ¶ *It rained.* The word might have been rendered, *he rained.* In Genesis it is said that the Lord did it. ¶ *Fire and brimstone.* God destroyed Sodom on account of its great wickedness. He took vengeance on it for its sins; and the example of Sodom is set before men to deter them from committing great transgressions, and as a full proof that God will punish the guilty. See Isa. i. 10. Jer. xxiii. 14; also Jude 7. Yet in overthrowing Sodom, God used natural means. He is not to be supposed to have created fire and brimstone for the occasion, but to have directed the natural means at his disposal for the overthrow: as he did not create the waters to drown the world, but merely broke up the fountains of the great deep, and opened the windows of heaven. Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, Deut. xxix. 23, were four great cities, on a plain where the Dead Sea now is, at the south east of Palestine, and into which the river Jordan flows. They were built on a plain which abounded, doubtless, as all that region now does, in bitumen, or naphtha, which is easily kindled, and which burns with great intensity. The phrase, *fire and brimstone*, is a Hebrew form of expression, denoting sulphureous fire, or fire having the smell of sulphur; and may denote a volcanic

29 But the same day that Lot went out <sup>1</sup> of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.\*

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 Remember Lot's <sup>3</sup> wife.

33 Whosoever <sup>4</sup> shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34 I tell you, in that night there <sup>5</sup> shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xix. 23, 24. <sup>2</sup> 2 Thess. i. 7. <sup>3</sup> Gen. xix. 26. <sup>4</sup> Ch. ix. 24. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi. 25. Mark viii. 35. John xii. 25. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.

eruption, or any burning like that of naphtha. There is no improbability in supposing that this destruction was accomplished by lightning, which ignited the naphtha; or that it was a volcanic eruption, which by direction of God, overthrew the wicked cities. \* *From heaven.* By command of God; or from the sky. To the people of Sodom, it had the appearance of coming from heaven, as all volcanic eruptions would have. Hundreds of towns have been overthrown in this way; and all by the agency of God. He rules the elements, and makes them his instruments, at his pleasure, in accomplishing the destruction of the wicked.\*

30. *Even thus, &c.* Destruction came upon the old world, and upon Sodom suddenly; when they were engaged in other things, and little expecting this. So suddenly, and unexpectedly, says he,

\* This must not be understood as doubting or denying that the destruction of the cities of the plain was a miraculous punishment of their wickedness. This remark would not be made, but that the orthodoxy of the commentator in matters of this kind has been somewhat questioned. Whether his way of explaining the means by which the miraculous destruction was accomplished be satisfactory or not, he evidently regarded the destruction itself as a miracle.—*Editor.*

35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two <sup>6</sup> men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, <sup>7</sup> thither will the eagles be gathered together.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Importunity in prayer—the widow and the judge, 1—8. Humility in prayer—the Pharisee and the publican, 9—14. Infants blessed, 15—17. The young ruler, 18—30. Jesus foretells his sufferings, 31—34. The blind man near Jericho healed, 35—43.*

AND he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men

\* Ver. 36th is wanting in most Greek copies. <sup>6</sup> Job xxix. 30. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xxiv. 23.

shall destruction come upon the Jewish people. See Notes on Matt. xxiv.

31. See Matt. xxiv. 17, 18.

32. *Remember Lot's wife.* See Gen. xix. 26. She looked back, she delayed, perhaps she desired to take something with her; and God made her a monument of his displeasure. Jesus directed his disciples when they saw the calamities coming upon the Jews to flee to the mountains. Matt. xxiv. 16. He here charges them to be in haste, not to look back, not to delay, but to escape quickly, and to remember that by delaying, the wife of Lot lost her life.

33. See Matt. x. 39.

34—36. See Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.

37. See Matt. xxiv. 26. ¶ *Where, Lord?* Where, or in what direction shall these calamities come? The answer implies where is the most guilt and wickedness. Eagles flock where there is prey. So the armies flock to the place where there is the most wickedness; and by this their thoughts were directed at once to Jerusalem, the place of eminent wickedness, and the place, therefore, where these calamities might be expected to begin.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

1. A parable. See Matt. xiii. 3. ¶ 7

ought <sup>1</sup> always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was <sup>2</sup> in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3 And there was a widow <sup>3</sup> in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while:

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 8; xxi. 26. Psa. lxxv. 2; cii. 17. Rom. xii. 12. Eph. vi. 18. Phil. iv. 6. <sup>2</sup> In a certain city. <sup>3</sup> Deut. xxvii. 19. 2 Sam. xiv. 5-7. Job xxi. 9; xxix. 12. Isa. i. 17.

*this end.* To show this. ¶ *Always.* At all times. That is, we must not neglect regular, stated seasons of prayer; we must seize on occasions of remarkable providences, as afflictions or signal blessings, to seek God in prayer; and we must always maintain a spirit of prayer, or be in a proper frame to lift up our hearts to God for his blessing. ¶ *Not to faint.* Not to grow weary or give over. To persevere in the application. The parable is designed to teach us, that though our prayers should long appear to be unanswered, we should persevere, and not grow weary in supplication to God.

2. *A judge.* One appointed by law to determine causes brought before him. This judge had no reverence for God, and consequently no regard for the rights of man. These two things go together. He that has no regard for God can be expected to have none for man. And our Lord has here indirectly taught us what ought to be the character of a judge, that he should fear God and regard the rights of man. Compare Deut. i. 16, 17. ¶ *Regarded man.* Cared not for man. Had no respect for the opinions or the rights of man.

3. *A widow.* This is a circumstance that gives increasing interest to the parable. Judges were bound to show peculiar attention to the widows. Jer. xxii. 3. The reason of this was that they were defenceless; were commonly poor; and were liable to be oppressed, by those in power. ¶ *Avenge me.* This would have been better translated, *Do me justice against my adversary, or Vindicate me from him.* It does not denote vengeance, or revenge; but simply that she wished to

but afterward he said within himself, <sup>4</sup> Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, <sup>5</sup> I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge <sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xii. 17; xvi. 3. Heb. iv. 12, 13. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xi. 8. Judg. xvi. 16. <sup>6</sup> 2 Sam. xiii. 24-27. <sup>6</sup> Rev. vi. 10. xviii. 20.

have justice done her, a thing which this judge was bound to do, but which it seems he had no disposition to do. ¶ *Adversary.* One opposed in law. In this case, it seems, that he was unwilling to do justice, and probably took advantage of her condition to oppress her.

4, 5. *For awhile.* Probably this means for a considerable time. It was his duty to attend to the claims of justice, but this was long delayed. ¶ *Within himself.* He thought, or came to a conclusion. ¶ *Though I fear not, &c.* This contains the reason why he attended to the case at all. It was not from any regard to justice, or to the duties of his office. It was simply to avoid trouble. And yet his conduct in this thing might have appeared very upright; and possibly very strictly according to law, and to justice. How many actions are performed that appear well, when the doers of those actions know that they are mere hypocrisy! And how many are performed from the basest and lowest motives of selfishness, that have the appearance of external propriety, and even of goodness! ¶ *She weary me.* The word used here in the original, is that which was used to denote the wounds and bruises caused by boxers who beat each other, and blacken their eyes, and disable them. See Notes on 1 Cor. ix. 27. Hence it means any vexatious and troublesome importunity that takes the time, and disables from other employment.

6. *Hear, &c.* Give attention to this, and derive from it practical instruction.

7. *Shall not God avenge, &c.* We are not to suppose that the character of God is at all represented by that judge, or that



his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long<sup>1</sup> with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlii. 1. 2. Hab. ii. 2. Heb. x. 35—37.

his principles of conduct are at all those of the judge. This parable shows us, conclusively, that many circumstances of a parable are not to be interpreted closely. They are mere appendages to the narrative. The great truth which our Saviour designed to teach is what we ought to endeavour to find. In this case there can be no doubt what this truth is. He has himself told us that 'men ought always to pray and not to faint.' This he teaches by the example in the parable. And the argument which it implies is this. 1. A poor widow, by her perseverance only, obtained from an unjust man what otherwise she would not have obtained. 2. God is not unjust. He is good, and disposed to do justice, and to bestow mercy. If, therefore, this wicked man by persevering prayer was induced to do justice, how much more shall God, who is good, and who is not actuated by any such selfish and base principles, do justice to them who apply to him! ¶ *Avenge.* Do justice to, or vindicate them. This may have a two-fold reference. 1. To the disciples in the time of Jesus, who were about to be oppressed and persecuted, and over whom calamities were about to come, as if God did not regard their cries, and had forsaken them. To them Jesus gives the assurance that God would hear their petitions, and come forth to vindicate them; and that, notwithstanding all these calamities, He would yet appear for their deliverance. 2. It may have a more general meaning. The people of God are often oppressed, calumniated, persecuted. They are few in number and feeble. They seem to be almost forsaken and cast down, and their enemies triumph. Yet in due time, God will hear their prayers, and will come forth for their vindication. And even if it should not be in this life, yet he will do it speedily in the day of judgment, when he will pronounce them blessed, and receive them for ever to himself. ¶ *His own elect.* People of God, saints, Christians; so called, because God has chosen them to be his. The term is usually given to the true followers

them speedily. \* Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall<sup>2</sup> he find faith on the earth?

<sup>2</sup> Psa. xlii. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9. \* Matt. xxiv. 9—13. 1 Thess. v. 1—3. Heb. x. 23—26. Jas. v. 1—8.

of God in the scriptures, and is a term of affection, denoting his great and peculiar love in choosing them out of a world of sinners, and conferring on them grace, and mercy, and eternal life. See Eph. i. 4. Col. iii. 12. 1 Thess. i. 4. 1 Pet. i. 2. It signifies here that they are peculiarly dear to him, that he feels a deep interest in their welfare, and that he will, therefore, be ready to come forth to their aid. The judge felt no special interest in that widow, yet he heard her; God feels a particular regard, a tender love for his elect, and therefore he will hear and save. ¶ *Which cry day and night.* This expresses one striking characteristic of the elect of God; they pray, and pray constantly. None can have evidence that he is chosen of God who is not a man of prayer. One of the best marks by which the electing love of God is known, is that it disposes us to prayer. This passage supposes that when the elect of God are in trouble, and pressed down with calamities, they will cry unto him; and it affirms that, if they do, he will hear their cries, and answer their requests. ¶ *Though he bear long with them.* This passage has been variously interpreted; and there is some variety of reading in the manuscripts. Some read, 'Will not God avenge his elect? Will he linger in their cause?' But the most natural meaning is, Although he defers long to avenge them, and greatly tries their patience, yet he will avenge them. He tries their faith, he suffers their persecutions and trials to continue a long time; and it almost appears as if he would not interpose. Yet he will do it, and will save them.

8. *Speedily.* Suddenly, unexpectedly. He will surely vindicate them; and that at a time perhaps when they were nearly ready to give over, and sink into despair. This may refer to the deliverance of the disciples from their approaching trials and persecutions among the Jews; or is general to the effect that God will interpose and aid his people. ¶ *Nevertheless.* But. Notwithstanding this. Though this is true that God shall avenge his elect,

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which <sup>1</sup> trusted in

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 23; xv. 23, xvi. 15. Prov. xxx. 12. Rom. vii. 9. Phil. iii. 4-6.

yet will he find his elect faithful, expecting him? The danger is not that God will be unfaithful. He will surely be true to his promises. But the danger is that his elect, his afflicted people, will be discouraged, will not persevere in prayer, will not continue to have confidence in Him, and under heavy trials, will be sinking into despondency. The sole meaning of this phrase, therefore, is, that there is more danger that his people would grow weary, than that God would be found unfaithful, and fail to avenge his elect. For this cause Christ spoke the parable; and by the design of the parable, this passage is to be interpreted. ¶ *Son of man cometh.* This probably refers to the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, the coming of the Messiah, by his mighty power, to abolish the ancient dispensation, and to set up the new. ¶ *Faith.* The word *faith* is sometimes taken to denote the whole of religion; and it has been understood in this sense here. But there is a close connexion in what Christ says, and it should be understood as referring to what he said before. The truth that he had been teaching was that God would deliver his people from their calamities, and save them, though he suffered them to be long tried. He asks here, whether, when he came, he should find this faith, or a belief of this truth among his followers? Would they be found persevering in prayer, and believing that God would yet avenge them; or would they cease to pray always, and faint? This is not to be understood, therefore, as affirming that when Christ comes to judgment, there will be few Christians, and the world be overrun with wickedness. That may be true; but it is not the truth taught here. ¶ *The earth.* The land, referring particularly to the land of Judea. The discussion had particular reference to the trials and persecutions of the disciples in that land. This question implies that in those trials, many professed disciples might faint, and many of his real followers might almost lose sight of this great truth, and begin to inquire whether God would interpose to save them? The

themselves that <sup>2</sup> they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the

<sup>2</sup> Or, as being righteous.

same question may be asked respecting any other remarkable visitation of the Son of God in affliction. When tried and persecuted, do we believe that God will avenge us? Do we pray always and not faint? Have we faith to believe that though clouds and darkness are round about him, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne? And when storms of persecution assail us, can we go to God, and confidently commit our cause to him, and believe that he will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day?

9. *Unto certain.* Unto some. ¶ *Which trusted in themselves.* Who conceited of themselves, or who supposed that they were righteous. They did not trust to God, or the Messiah for righteousness, but in their own works. They vainly supposed they had themselves complied with the demands of the law of God. ¶ *Despised others.* Others who were not as externally righteous as themselves. This was the character of the Pharisees. They trusted in their outward conformity to the ceremonies of the law. They considered all but themselves as sinners. This, moreover, is the true character of self-righteousness. Men of that stamp always despise all others. They think they are far above them in holiness, and are disposed to say to them, "Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou." Isa. lxxv. 5. True religion, on the contrary, is humble. Those who trust in Christ for righteousness feel that they are, in themselves, poor, and miserable, and guilty! and they are willing to admit that others may be much better than themselves. Certain it is, they despise no one. They love all men; they regard them, however vile, as the creatures of God, and as going to eternity, and are disposed to treat them well, and to aid them in their journey toward another world.

10. *The temple.* Into one of the courts of the temple, the court where prayer was commonly offered. See Note, Matt. xxi. 12. ¶ *A pharisee.* See Note, Matt. iii. 7. ¶ *Publican.* See Note, Matt. v. 46.

temple to pray; the one a Pharisee,<sup>1</sup> and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself. God, I

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 29, 30. Matt. xxi. 31, 32. Acts xxiii. 6—8; xxvi. 5.

11. *Stood and prayed thus with himself.* Some have proposed to render this, *stood by himself*, and prayed. In this way it would be characteristic of the sect of the Pharisees, who dreaded the contact of others as polluting, and who were disposed to say to all, *Stand by yourselves.* The Syriac so rendered it. But it is doubtful whether the Greek will allow this construction. If not, it means he said over to himself what he had done, and what was the ground on which he expected the favour of God. ¶ *God, I thank thee.* There was still in the prayer of the Pharisee an appearance of real religion. He did not profess to claim that he had made himself better than others. He was willing to acknowledge that God had done it for him, and that He had a right to his gratitude for it. Hypocrites are often the most orthodox in opinion of any men. They know the truth and admit it. They use it frequently in their prayers and conversation. They will even persecute those who happen to differ from them in opinion, and who may be really wrong. We are not to judge of the piety of men by the fact that they admit the truth, or even that they use it often in their prayers. It is, however not wrong to thank God that he has kept us from the gross sins which other men commit. But it should not be done publicly like the Pharisee; nor should it be done forgetting still that we are great sinners and need pardon. These were the faults of the Pharisees. ¶ *Extortioners.* Rapacious, avaricious, who take away the goods of others by force and violence. It means also, those who take advantage of the necessities of others, the poor and the oppressed, and extort their property. ¶ *Unjust.* They who are not fair and honest in their dealings, who get the property of others by fraud. They are distinguished from extortioners, because they who are unjust may have the appearance of honesty; in the other case, there is not.

12. *I fast twice, &c.* The religion of

thank thee, that I am not <sup>a</sup> as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week,

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lxxv. 5. Rev. iii. 17.

the Pharisee consisted in two things: first, that he did no injury to others; and secondly, that he attended faithfully to the external duties of piety. Having stated the first part of it, he proceeds now to state positively what he did. The first thing was that he fasted twice a week. This was probably the Jewish custom. The Pharisees are said to have fasted in private regularly on the second and fifth days of every week. This was in addition to the public days of fasting required in the law of Moses; and they, therefore, made more a matter of merit of it, because it was voluntary. ¶ *I give tithes.* A tithe means the tenth part of a thing. The tenth part he devoted to the service of religion, or to the use of the poor. A tenth part of the possessions of the Jews was required for the support of the Levites. Num. xviii. 21. In addition to the tithes required strictly by law, the Pharisees had tithed every thing which they possessed, even the smallest matters, as mint, anise, cummin, &c. Luke xi. 42. It was this probably on which he so particularly prided himself. As this could not be proved to be strictly required in the law, it had more the appearance of great piety, and, therefore he particularly dwelt on it. ¶ *I possess.* This may mean either all which I have, or all which I gain or acquire. It is not material which meaning be considered the true one.

The religion of the Pharisee, therefore, consisted: 1. In abstaining from injustice to others, in pretending to live a harmless, innocent, and upright life; and, 2. In a regular observance of all the external duties of religion. His fault consisted in relying on this kind of righteousness, in not feeling and acknowledging that he was a sinner, in not seeking a religion that should dwell in the heart and regulate the feelings, and in making public and ostentatious professions of his own goodness. Most of all was this abominable in the sight of God, who looks into the heart, and who sees wickedness there when the external actions may be blameless; and we

<sup>1</sup> I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, <sup>2</sup> would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote <sup>3</sup> upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for <sup>4</sup> every one that exalteth himself shall be abased;

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 10. <sup>2</sup> Sam. xv. 13. <sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 8; vii. 6, 7. <sup>4</sup> Extra ix. 6. <sup>5</sup> Jer. xxxi. 19. <sup>6</sup> Job xxii. 29. Matt. xxiii. 12.

may learn from the case of the Pharisee: 1. That it is not the man who has the most orthodox belief, that has, of course, the most piety. 2. That men may be externally moral, and not be righteous in the sight of God. 3. That they may be very exact in the external duties of religion, and even go beyond the strict letter of the law; that they may assume a great appearance of sanctity, and still be strangers to true piety. And, 4. That ostentation in religion, or a boasting before God of what we are, and of what we have done, is abominable in his sight. This spoils every thing, even if the life should be tolerably blameless, and if there should be real piety.

13. *Standing afar off.* Afar off from the temple. The place where prayers were offered in the temple was the court of women. The Pharisee advanced to the side of the court nearest to the temple, or as near as he could; the publican stood on the other side of the same court if he was a Jew, or in the court of the Gentiles if he was a pagan, as far as possible from the temple, being conscious of his unworthiness to approach the sacred place where God had his holy habitation. ¶ *So much as his eyes, &c.* Conscious of his guilt. He felt that he was a sinner; and shame and sorrow prevented his looking up. Men who are conscious of guilt always fix their eyes on the ground. ¶ *Smote upon his breast.* An expression of grief and anguish in view of his sins. It is a sign of grief among almost all nations. ¶ *God be merciful, &c.* The prayer of the publican was totally different from that of the Pharisee. He made no boast of his own

and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

15 And <sup>5</sup> they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

17 Verily I say unto you, Who-

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xix. 13. Mark x. 13-16.

righteousness towards God or man. He felt that he was a sinner, and, feeling it, was willing to acknowledge it. This is the kind of prayer that will be acceptable to God. When we are willing to confess and forsake our sins, we shall find mercy. The publican was willing to do this in any place, in the presence of any persons, amidst the multitudes in the temple, or alone. He felt most that God was a witness of his actions; and he was willing, therefore, to confess his sins before him. And while we should not seek to do this publicly, yet we should be willing at all times "to confess and bewail our manifold sins and transgressions, to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by God's infinite goodness and mercy." It is not dishonourable to make acknowledgement, when we have done wrong. No man is so much dishonoured as he who is a sinner and is not willing to confess it; he who has done wrong and yet attempts to conceal the fault, thus adding hypocrisy to his other crimes.

14. *I tell you.* The Pharisees would have said that the first man here was approved. Jesus assures them that they judged erroneously. God judges of this differently from men. ¶ *Justified.* Accepted, or approved of God. The word *justify* means to declare, or treat as righteous. In this case it means manifestly that in their prayers to God, the one was approved, and the other not; the one went down with the favour of God, in answer to his petitions, the other went without that favour. ¶ *For every one, &c.* See chap. xiv. 11.

15-30. See Matt. xix. 13-30.

soever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child <sup>1</sup> shall in no wise enter therein.

18 And <sup>2</sup> a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, *that is*, God.

20 Thou knowest the <sup>3</sup> commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure <sup>4</sup> in heaven: and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How <sup>5</sup> hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cxxxi. 2. Mark x. 15. 1 Pet. i. 14.  
<sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 16—22. Mark x. 17—22. <sup>3</sup> Exod. xx. 12—17. Deut. v. 16—21. Rom. xiii. 9.  
<sup>4</sup> Matt. vi. 19, 20. 1 Tim. vi. 19. <sup>5</sup> Prov. xi. 28. 1 Tim. vi. 9.

31—33. See Matt. xx. 17—19. ¶ *By the prophets.* Those who foretold the coming of the Messiah, and whose predictions are recorded in the Old Testament. ¶ *Son of man.* The Messiah. They predicted that certain things should take place respecting the Messiah that was to come. See Isa. liii. Dan. ix. 25—27. These things, Jesus says, shall be accomplished in him, he being the Son of man, or the Messiah.

34. *Understood none of these things.* Though they were plainly revealed, yet such were their prejudices, and their un-

derstanding, that they could not receive the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, The <sup>6</sup> things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath <sup>7</sup> left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life <sup>8</sup> everlasting.

31 ¶ Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and <sup>9</sup> all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered <sup>10</sup> unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:

33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And <sup>11</sup> they understood none

<sup>6</sup> Ch. i. 37. Jer. xxxii. 17. Zech. viii. 4.  
<sup>7</sup> Deut. xxviii. 9. <sup>8</sup> Rev. ii. 10. <sup>9</sup> Psa. xxii. Isa. liii. <sup>10</sup> Ch. xxiii. 1. Matt. xxvii. 2. John xviii. 28. Acts iii. 13. <sup>11</sup> Mark ix. 32. John xiii. 16.

willingness to believe them, that they did not understand them. They expected that he would be a temporal prince, and a conqueror; and they were not willing to believe that he would be delivered into the hands of his enemies. They did not see how that could be consistent with the prophecies. To us now, these things appear plain, and we may hence learn that those things which, to us appear most mysterious, may yet appear perfectly plain. And we should learn to trust in God, and believe just what he has spoken. See Matt. xvi. 21; xvii. 23.

of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

35 ¶ And it <sup>1</sup> came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the wayside, begging:

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy <sup>2</sup> on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried <sup>3</sup> so much the more, *Thou* Son of David have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx. 30—34. Mark x. 46—52. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xlii. 12. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxli. 1.

35—43. See this passages explained in Matt. xx. 29—34.

### CHAPTER XIX.

1. *And Jesus entered, &c.* See Matt. xx. 29. This means, perhaps, he was passing through Jericho, when Zacchæus saw him. His house was in Jericho.

2. *A man named Zacchæus.* The name *Zacchæus* is Hebrew, and shows that this man was a Jew. The publicans, therefore, were not all foreigners. ¶ *Chief among the publicans.* Who presided over other tax-gatherers, or who received their collections and transmitted them to the Roman government. ¶ *He was rich.* Though this class of men was despised, and often infamous, yet it seems that they were sometimes wealthy. They sustained, however, the general character of sinners, because they were particularly odious in the eyes of the Jews. See ver. 4. The

said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy <sup>4</sup> faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received <sup>5</sup> his sight, and followed him, glorifying <sup>6</sup> God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

### CHAPTER XIX.

*Zacchæus, 1—10. Talents to be improved. 11—27. The triumphant entry into Jerusalem, 28—40. Jesus weeps over Jerusalem, 41—48.*

AND *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.<sup>7</sup>

2 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zacchæus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.<sup>8</sup>

3 And he sought to see Jesus <sup>9</sup> who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xvii. 19. <sup>5</sup> Psa. xxx. 2. <sup>6</sup> Ch. v. 26. Acts iv. 21; xl. 18. Gal. i. 24. <sup>7</sup> Josh. vi. 26. <sup>8</sup> 1 Kin. xvi. 34. <sup>9</sup> Ch. xviii. 24—26. <sup>9</sup> Ch. ix. 7—9; xxiii. 8. John xii. 21.

evangelist has thought it worthy of record that he was rich, perhaps, because it was so unlikely that a rich man should follow so poor and despised a personage as Jesus of Nazareth, and because it was so unusual a thing during his personal ministry. Not many rich were called, but God chiefly chose the poor of the world.

3. *Who he was.* Rather what sort of person he was, or how he appeared. He had that curiosity which is natural to men to see one of whom they have heard much. It would seem also that in this case mere curiosity led to his conversion and that of his family. Compare 1 Cor. xiv. 23—25. God makes use of every principle, or curiosity, or sympathy, or affection, or hope, or fear, to lead men in the way of salvation, and to impress truth on the minds of sinners. ¶ *The press.* The crowd, the multitude that surrounded Jesus. Earthly princes are often borne in

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw <sup>1</sup> him, and said unto him, Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide <sup>2</sup> at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cxxxix. 1—3.    <sup>2</sup> John xiv. 23. Rev. iii. 20.

splendid equipages, or even carried, as in eastern nations, in palanquins on the shoulders of men. Jesus mingled with the multitude, not seeking distinctions of that sort, and perhaps, in that appearance, not distinguished from thousands that followed him. ¶ *Little of stature.* Short. Not a tall man.

4. *A sycamore-tree.* A tree that had the leaves of the mulberry, and that bore a species of fig. It was not exactly like our sycamore, but perhaps had some little resemblance to it. See Note on ch. xvii. 6.

5. *Abide at thy house.* Remain there, or put up with him. This was an honour which Zacchæus did not expect. The utmost, it seems, which he aimed at was to see Jesus. But instead of that, Jesus proposed to remain with him, and give him the benefit of his personal instruction. It is but one among a thousand instances, where the Saviour goes, in bestowing mercies, far beyond the desert, the desire, or the expectation of men; and it is not improper to learn from his example, that solicitude to behold the Saviour will not pass unnoticed by him, but will meet with his warm approbation, and be connected with his blessing. Jesus was willing to encourage efforts to come to him, and his benevolence prompted him to gratify the desires of the man who was solicitous to see him. He does not disdain the mansions of the rich, more than he does the dwelling places of the poor, provided there be a humble heart; and he did not suppose there was less need of salvation in the house of the rich man than among the poor. He set an example to all his ministers, and was not afraid or ashamed to proclaim his gospel amidst wealth, and

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That <sup>3</sup> he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; <sup>4</sup> and if I have taken any thing from any man by <sup>5</sup> false accusation, I restore <sup>6</sup> him fourfold.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 30; xviii. 9—14.    Matt. ix. 11; xxi. 28—31.    <sup>4</sup> Psa. xli. 1.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. iii. 14.    <sup>6</sup> Exod. xxii. 1.    <sup>7</sup> 2 Sam. xii. 6.

was not awed by external splendour or grandeur.

7. *Murmured.* Found fault, complained. ¶ *To be a guest.* To remain with, or to be entertained by. ¶ *A man that is a sinner.* All publicans were regarded as great sinners; and the chief of the publicans, therefore, would be regarded as peculiarly wicked. It would appear also from Zacchæus' confession that his character had been that of an oppressive man. But the people seemed to forget that he might be a penitent, and that the Messiah came to save that which was lost.

8. *The half of my goods I give to the poor.* It is not necessary to understand this as affirming that this had been his practice; or that he said this in the way of proclaiming his own righteousness. It may be understood rather as a purpose which he then formed under the teaching of Christ. He seems to have been sensible that he was a sinner. He was convinced, as we may suppose, by the presence and discourse of Jesus. At first attracted only by curiosity, or it may be by partial conviction that this was the Messiah, he had sought to see the Saviour; but his presence and conversation convinced him of his guilt, and he stood and openly confessed his sins, and expressed his purpose to give half his ill-gotten property to the poor. This was not a proclamation of his own righteousness, nor the ground of his righteousness, but it was the evidence of the sincerity of his repentance, and the confession which, with the mouth, is made unto salvation. Rom. x. 10. ¶ *And if I have taken.* His office gave him the power of oppressing the people, and it seems that he did not deny that he had oppressed. ¶ *By false accusation.* This

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son <sup>1</sup> of Abraham.

10 For <sup>2</sup> the Son of man is come

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 11.

is the same word which in Luke iii. 14, is rendered accuse falsely. The accusation seems to have been so made that the person accused was obliged to pay much greater taxes, or so that his property came into the hands of the informer. There are many ways in which this might be done, but we do not know the exact manner. ¶ *I restore him.* We cannot suppose that this had been always his practice, for no man would wantonly extort money from another, and then restore him at once four times as much. But it means that he was made sensible of his guilt; perhaps that his mind had been a considerable time perplexed in the matter; and that now he was resolved to make this restoration. This was the evidence of his penitence and conversion. And here it may be remarked, that this is always an indisputable evidence of a man's conversion to God. A man who has hoarded ill-gotten gold, if he becomes a Christian, will be disposed with it to do good. A man who has injured others, who has cheated them, or defrauded them, even by due forms of law, must, if he be a Christian, be willing as far as possible to make restoration. Zaccheus, for any thing that appears to the contrary, may have obtained this property by the decisions of courts of justice; but he now felt that it was wrong; and though the defrauded men could not legally recover it, yet his conscience told him that in order to his being a true penitent he must make restitution. One of the best evidences of a genuine revival of religion is when it produces this result. And one of the surest evidences that a professed penitent is not a true one, is when he is not disposed to allow the example of this son of Abraham, and make proper restitution. ¶ *Four-fold.* Four times as much as had been unjustly taken. This was the amount that was required in the Jewish law when a sheep had been stolen, and a man was convicted of the theft by trial at law. Exod. xxii. 1. If he confessed it himself, without being

to seek and to save that which was lost.<sup>3</sup>

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jeru.

<sup>3</sup> Ezek. xxxiv. 16. Rom. v. 6.

detected and tried, he had only to restore what was stolen, and add to it a fifth part of its value. Num. v. 6, 7. The sincerity of Zaccheus' repentance was manifest by his being willing to make restoration as great as if it had been proved against him, evincing his sense of the wrong, and his purpose to make full restitution. The Jews were allowed to take no interest of their brethren, Lev. xxv. 36, 37; and this is the reason why that is not mentioned as the measure of the restitution. When injury of this kind is done in other places, the least that is proper is to restore the principle and interest; for the injured person has a right to all that his property would have procured him, if it had not been unjustly taken away.

9. *Salvation is come to this house.* This family. They this day received the blessings of the gospel, and became interested in the Messiah's kingdom. Salvation commences when men truly receive Christ, and their sins are pardoned; it is completed when the soul is sanctified and received up into heaven. ¶ *Forasmuch.* Because. For he has given evidence that he is a new man, and is disposed to forsake his sins and receive the gospel. ¶ *The Son of Abraham.* Hitherto although a Jew, yet he has been a sinner, and a great sinner. He was not worthy to be called a son of Abraham. Now by repentance, and by receiving the Christ whose day Abraham saw and was glad, John viii. 56, he has shown himself to be worthy to be called his son. Abraham was an example of distinguished piety; the father of the faithful, Rom. iv. 11, as well as the ancestor of the Jews. They were called his sons who were descended from him, and particularly they who resembled him. In this place the phrase is used in both senses.

10. See Matt. xviii. 11.

11. *He spake a parable.* This parable has in some respects a resemblance to the parable of the talents in Matt. xxv. 14—30. But it is not the same. They differ



usalem, and because <sup>1</sup> they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

12 He said therefore, A certain

<sup>1</sup> Acts i. 6.

in the following respects: That was spoken after he had entered Jerusalem, this while on his way there. That was delivered on the mount of Olives, this in the house of Zaccheus. That was delivered to teach them the necessity of improving the talents committed to them, this was with a different design. He was now near Jerusalem. A great multitude attended him. His disciples regarded him as the Messiah, and by this they understood a temporal prince who should deliver them from the dominion of the Romans and set them at liberty. They were anxious for that, and supposed that the time was at hand, and that now, as soon as he entered Jerusalem, he would assume the appearance of such a prince, and set up his kingdom. To correct that notion, seems to have been the main design of this parable. To do that, he tells them of a man who had a right to the kingdom, yet who, before taking possession of it, went into another kingdom to receive a confirmation of his title, thus intimating that he would also go away before he would completely set up his kingdom, ver. 12; he tells them that this nobleman left his servants property to be improved in his absence, as he would have his disciples' talents to be used in his service, ver. 12, 13; he tells them that this nobleman was rejected by his own citizens, ver. 14, as he would be by the Jews; and that he received the kingdom and called them to an account, as he also would the Jews and his own disciples. ¶ *Because he was nigh to Jerusalem.* The capital of the country, and where they supposed he would probably set up his kingdom. ¶ *The kingdom of God should immediately appear.* The reign of the Messiah should immediately commence. He spake the parable to correct that expectation.

12. *A certain nobleman.* A prince; a man descended from kings, and having a title, therefore, to succeed in the kingdom. ¶ *Went into a far country, &c.* This expression is derived from the state of things in Judea in the time of our

<sup>2</sup> nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten ser-

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxv. 14—30. Mark xiii. 34.

Saviour. Judea was subject to the Romans, having been conquered by Pompey about sixty years before Christ. It was, however, governed by Jews who held the government under the Romans. It was necessary that the prince or king should receive a recognition of his right to the kingdom by the Roman emperor, and in order to this that he should go to Rome; or, as it is said here, that he might receive to himself a kingdom. This actually occurred several times. Archelaus, a son of Herod the Great, about the time of the birth of Jesus, went to Rome to obtain a confirmation of the title which his father had left him. Herod the Great, his father, had gone to Rome before to implore the aid and countenance of Antony. Agrippa, the younger, grandson of Herod the Great, went to Rome also to obtain the favour of Tiberius, and to be confirmed in his government. Such instances, having frequently occurred, would make this parable perfectly intelligible to those to whom it was addressed. By the nobleman here is undoubtedly represented the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ: by his going into a far country, is denoted his going to heaven, to the right hand of his Father, before he should fully set up his kingdom and establish his reign among men.

13. *Ten servants.* Nothing in particular is denoted by the number *ten*. It is a circumstance intended to keep up the narrative. In general, by these *servants*, our Saviour denotes his disciples, and intends to teach us that talents are given us to be improved, for which we must give an account at his return. ¶ *Ten pounds.* The word translated *pound* here denotes the Hebrew minah, which was equal to about £5 10s. The pounds here denote the talents which God has given to his servants on earth to improve, and for which they must give an account in the day of judgment. ¶ *Occupy till I come.* The word *occupy* here means not merely to possess, as it often does in our language

vants, and delivered them ten <sup>1</sup> pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 But <sup>2</sup> his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the <sup>3</sup> money, that he might <sup>4</sup> know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying,

<sup>1</sup> *Mina*, here translated a pound, is 12 ounces and a half, which at 5 shillings the ounce, is 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* <sup>2</sup> John i. 11; xv. 18. <sup>3</sup> *Silver*, and so ver. 23. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xviii. 23—34. Rom. xiv. 10—12. 1 Cor. iv. 1—5.

but to improve, to employ in business, for the purpose of increasing it, or of making profit on it. The direction was to use this money so as to gain more against his approach. So Jesus commands his disciples to improve their talents, to make the most of them, to increase their capability of doing good, and to do it until he comes to call us hence, by death, to meet him. See 1 Cor. xii. 7. Eph. iv. 7.

14. *But his citizens.* His subjects, or the people whom he was desirous of ruling. ¶ *Hated him.* On account of his character, and their fear of oppression. This was the case with regard to Archelaus the Jewish prince, who went to Rome to be confirmed in his kingdom. ¶ *Sent a message—saying, &c.* His discontented subjects fearing what would be the character of his reign, sent an embassy to remonstrate against his being appointed as the ruler. This actually took place. Archelaus went to Rome to obtain from Augustus a confirmation of his title to reign over that part of Judea which had been left him by his father, Herod the Great. The Jews, knowing his character (compare Matt. ii. 22), sent an embassy of fifty men to Rome to prevail on Augustus not to confer the title on him, but they could not succeed. He received the kingdom, and reigned in Judea in place of his father. As this fact was fresh in the

Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful <sup>5</sup> in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him. Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, Behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. xvi. 10.

memory of the Jews, it makes this parable much more striking. By this part of it, Christ designed to denote that the Jews would reject him, the Messiah, and would say that they did not desire him to reign over them. See John i. 11. So it is true of all sinners that they do not wish Jesus to reign over them; they reject him; and, if it were possible, would cast him off, and never submit to his reign.

15. See Matt. xxv. 19.

16—19. See Matt. xxv. 20, 21. ¶ *Ten cities.* We are not to suppose that this will be literally fulfilled in heaven. Christ teaches here that our rewards in heaven will be in proportion to our faithfulness in improving our talents on earth.

30. *A napkin.* A towel. He means by it that he had not wasted it, nor thrown it by carelessly, but had been very careful of it: so much so as to be at the pains to tie it up in a towel, and put it in a safe place, as if he had been very faithful to his trust. So many men employ their talents, and their learning, and their influence. They have them; they keep them; but they never use them in the service of the Lord Jesus, and in regard to their influence in the church or the world it would be the same if God had never conferred on them these talents.

21. *An austere man.* Hard, severe, oppressive. The word is commonly ap-

22 And he saith unto him, Out <sup>1</sup> of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow :

23 Wherefore <sup>2</sup> then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. i. 16. Job xv. 6. Matt. xii. 37; xxii. 12. Rom. iii. 19. <sup>2</sup> Rom. ii. 4, 5.

plied to unripe fruit, and means sour, unpleasant, harsh. In this case, it means that the master would take every advantage, and while he lived in idleness would make his living out of the toils of others unjustly exacted. ¶ *Thou takest up, &c.* Thou dost exact of others what thou didst not give. The phrase is applied to a man who finds what has been lost by another, and keeps it himself, and refuses to return it to the owner. All this is designed to show the sinner's view of God. He regards him as unjust, demanding more than man has power to render, and more, therefore, than God has a right to demand. See Note on Matt. xxv. 24.

22. *Out of thine own mouth.* By your own statement, or your own views of my character. If you knew that this was my character, and knew that I should be rigid, firm, and even severe, it would have been the path of wisdom in you to have made the best use of the money in your power. But as you knew my character beforehand, and were well acquainted with the fact that I should demand strictly the complying with your obligation, you have no right to complain if you are condemned accordingly. We are not to suppose that God is unjust or austere, but what we are to learn from this is, that as man knows that God will be just, and will call him to a strict account in the day of judgment, he ought to be prepared to meet him, and

26 For I say unto you, That <sup>3</sup> unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

27 But those mine enemies, <sup>4</sup> which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

28 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

29 And <sup>5</sup> it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called

<sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 18. Matt. xiii. 12; xxv. 29. Mark iv. 25. <sup>4</sup> Ps. ii. 4; v. 9; xxi. 8, 9. Isa. lxxi. 6, 14. Nah. i. 2, 8. Heb. x. 13. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxi. 1—11. Mark xi. 1—11.

that he cannot then complain if God should condemn him.

23. *The bank.* The treasury, or the place of exchange. Why did you not loan it out, that it might be increased! ¶ *Usury.* Interest.

25. *And they said unto him.* Those standing around him said. ¶ *He hath, &c.* This was probably an observation made by some of the bystanders as if to correct him in the distribution. 'He has already ten pounds. Why take away this one, and add to what he already possesses! Why should his property be increased at the expense of this man, who has but one pound?' The answer to this is given in the following verse, that every one that hath, to him shall be given; every man who is faithful and honest, and improves what God gives him, shall receive much more.

26, 27. *For I say, &c.* These are the words of the nobleman declaring the principles on which he would distribute the rewards of his kingdom. ¶ *But these, &c.* By the punishment of those who would not that he should reign over them, is denoted the ruin that was to come upon the Jewish nation for rejecting the Messiah, and also upon all sinners for not receiving him as their King. See Notes on the parable of the talents in Matt. xxv.

28—39. See Notes on Matt. xxi. 1—16.

the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a cold tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need<sup>1</sup> of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their<sup>2</sup> garments upon the colt, and they set<sup>3</sup> Jesus thereon.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. l. 10.    <sup>2</sup> 2 Kin. ix. 13.    <sup>3</sup> John xii. 14.

40. *The stones would—cry out.* It is proper that they should celebrate my coming. Their acclamations ought not to be suppressed. So joyful is the event which they celebrate, the coming of the Messiah, that it is not fit that I should attempt to impose silence on them. The expression here seems to be proverbial, and is not to be taken literally. Proverbs are designed to express the truth strongly, but are not to be taken to signify as much as if they were to be interpreted literally. The sense is, that Christ's coming was an event of so much importance, that it ought to be celebrated in some way, and would be celebrated. It would be impossible to restrain the people, and improper to attempt it. The language here is strong proverbial language to denote that fact. We are not to suppose, therefore, that our Saviour meant to say that the stones were conscious of his coming, or that God would make them speak, but only that there was strong feeling among the people,

36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

38 Saying, Blessed<sup>4</sup> be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: <sup>5</sup> peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the<sup>6</sup> stones would immediately cry out.

41 ¶ And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over<sup>7</sup> it,

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xiii. 35.    Psa. cxviii. 26.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. ii. 14. Rom. v. 1.    Eph. ii. 14.    <sup>6</sup> Hab. ii. 11.    Matt. iii. 9.    <sup>7</sup> Psa. cxix. 136.    Jer. ix. 1; xiii. 17; xvii. 16.    John xi. 35.

that it was proper that they should express it in this manner, and that it was not fit that he should attempt to repress it.

41—44. *He wept over it.* Showing his compassion for the guilty city, and his strong sense of the evils that were about to come upon it. See Matt. xxiii. 37—39. As he entered the city he passed over the mount of Olives. From that mountain there was a full and magnificent view of the city. See Notes on Matt. xxi. 1. The view of the splendid capital, the knowledge of its crimes, the remembrance of the mercies of God towards it, the certainty that it might have been spared if it had received the prophets and himself, the knowledge that it was about to put him, their long-expected Messiah to death, and for that to be given up to utter desolation, affected his heart, and the triumphant King and Lord of Zion wept! Amidst all his prosperity, and all the acclamations of the multitude, the heart of the Saviour was turned from the

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, <sup>1</sup> the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast <sup>2</sup> a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side.

44 And <sup>3</sup> shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and <sup>4</sup> they shall not leave in thee one stone upon an-

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xciv. 7, 8. Heb. iii. 7; xlii. 15. <sup>2</sup> Isa. xlix. 2, 3. Jer. vi. 5, 6. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xlii. 34, 35. <sup>4</sup> 1 Kin. ix. 7, 8. Mic. iii. 12. Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxiv. 2. Mark xiii. 2.

tokens of rejoicing to the miseries about to come on a guilty people. Yet they might have been saved. If thou hadst known, says he, even thou, with all thy guilt, the things that make for thy peace; if thou hadst repented, been righteous, and received the Messiah; if thou hadst not stained thy hands with the blood of the prophets, and shouldst not with that of the Son of God, then these terrible calamities would not come upon thee. But it is too late. They are hid from thine eyes. The national wickedness is too great. The cup is full. Mercy is exhausted. And Jerusalem, with all her pride and splendour, the glory of her temple, and the pomp of her service, must perish! ¶ *For the days shall come, &c.* This took place under Titus, the Roman general, A.D. 70, about thirty years after this was spoken. ¶ *Cast a trench about thee.* The word *trench* now means commonly a pit or ditch. When the Bible was translated, it meant also earth thrown up to defend a camp. See *Johnson's Dictionary*. This is the meaning of the original here. It is not a pit, or large ditch, but a pile of earth, stones, or wood thrown up to guard a camp, and to defend it from the approach of an enemy. This was done at Jerusalem. Josephus informs us that Titus, in order that he might compel the city to surrender by famine, built a wall around the whole circumference of the city. This wall was

other; because <sup>5</sup> thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

45 And <sup>6</sup> he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought;

46 Saying unto them, It is <sup>7</sup> written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den <sup>8</sup> of thieves.

47 And he taught <sup>9</sup> daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

48 And could not find what they

<sup>5</sup> Lam. i. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 12. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxi. 12. <sup>7</sup> 13. Mark xi. 15-17. John ii. 15, 17. <sup>8</sup> 1sa. lvi. 7. <sup>9</sup> Jer. vii. 11. <sup>10</sup> John xviii. 20.

nearly five miles in length, and furnished with thirteen castles or towers. This work was completed with incredible labour in ten days. The professed design of this wall was to keep the city in on every side. Never was a prophecy more strikingly accomplished. ¶ *Shall lay thee even with the ground, &c.* This was literally done. Titus caused a plough to pass over the place where the temple stood. See Notes, Matt. xxiv. All this was done, says Christ, because Jerusalem knew not the time of its visitation; that is, did not know, and would not know, that the Messiah had come. His coming was the time of their merciful visitation. That time had been predicted, and invaluable blessings promised as the result of his advent. But they would not know it. They rejected him. They put him to death, and it was just that they should be destroyed.

45, 46. See Notes, Matt. xxi. 12, 13.

47. *Daily in the temple.* That is for five or six days before his crucifixion.

48. *Could not find, &c.* Were not able to accomplish their purpose: they did not know how to bring it about. ¶ *Very attentive.* Literally, *hung upon him* to hear him. The word denotes an anxious desire, a fixed attention, a cleaving to him, and unwillingness to leave him, so that they might hear his words. This is always the case when men become anxious about their salvation, that they manifest it by hanging on the preaching of the

might do: for all the people <sup>1</sup> were very attentive to hear him.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Christ's authority and John's baptism, 1—8. The unfaithful husbandmen, 9—18. The tribute question, 19—26. The Sadducees silenced, 27—40. Jesus, David's Son and Lord, 41—44. Caution against the scribes, 45—47.*

AND <sup>2</sup> it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him* with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by <sup>3</sup> what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said

<sup>1</sup> Or, *hanged on him.* <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxi. 23—27. Mark xi. 27—33. <sup>3</sup> Acts iv. 7—10; vii. 27.

gospel; by fixed attention, and unwillingness to leave the place where the word of God is preached. In view of the fact that the Lord Jesus wept over Jerusalem, we may remark:

I. It was in view of the sins and danger of the inhabitants, and of the fact that they had rejected offered mercy.

II. There was occasion for weeping. Jesus would not have wept had there been no cause for it. If they were in no danger; if there was no punishment in the future world, why should he have wept? When the Lord Jesus weeps over sinners, it is the fullest proof that they are in danger.

III. Sinners are in the same danger now. They reject Christ as they did then. They despise the gospel as they did then. They refuse now to come to him as the inhabitants of Jerusalem did. Why are they not then in the same danger?

IV. Deep feeling, gushing emotions, lively affections are proper in religion. If the Saviour wept, it is not improper for us to weep. It is right. Nay, can it be right not to weep over the condition of lost man.

V. Religion is tenderness and love. It led the Saviour to weep, and it teaches

unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for <sup>4</sup> they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence *it* was.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable, A <sup>5</sup> certain man planted a vineyard, <sup>6</sup> and let

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xiv. 5. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxi. 33—41. Mark xii. 1—9. <sup>6</sup> Cant. viii. 11, 12. Isa. v. 1—7.

us to sympathize, and feel deeply. Sin hardens the heart, and makes it insensible to every pure and noble emotion; but religion teaches us to feel for others' woes, and to sympathize in the danger of others.

VI. Christians, and Christian ministers, should weep over lost sinners. They have souls just as precious as they had then, they are in the same danger, they are going to the judgment bar, they are wholly insensible to their danger and their duty.

"Did Christ o'er sinners weep,  
And shall our cheeks be dry?  
Let floods of penitential grief  
Burst forth from every eye.

"The Son of God in tears,  
Angels with wonder see!  
Be thou astonished, O my soul!  
He shed those tears for thee.

"He wept that we might weep;  
Each sin demands a tear;  
In heaven alone no sin is found,  
And there's no weeping there."

## CHAPTER XX.

1—9. See this passage explained in Matt. xxi. 23—27.

it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit <sup>1</sup> of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: <sup>2</sup> come, let <sup>3</sup> us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. <sup>4</sup> And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The <sup>5</sup> stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on <sup>6</sup>

whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 ¶ And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that <sup>7</sup> they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of *any*, but teachest the way of God <sup>8</sup> truly:

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

24 Shew me a <sup>9</sup> penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar's.

25 And he said unto them, Render <sup>10</sup> therefore unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held <sup>11</sup> their peace.

27 ¶ Then <sup>12</sup> came to him certain of the Sadducees, <sup>13</sup> which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote

<sup>1</sup> John xv. 16. Rom. vii. 4. <sup>2</sup> Psa. ii. 8. Rom. viii. 17. Heb. i. 2. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvii. 21—25. Acts ii. 23; iii. 15. <sup>4</sup> Neh. ix. 36, 37. <sup>5</sup> Psa. cxviii. 22. <sup>6</sup> Dan. ii. 34, 35.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxii. 15—33. Mark xii. 13—27. <sup>8</sup> Or, of a truth. <sup>9</sup> See Matt. xviii. 28. <sup>10</sup> Rom. xiii. 7. <sup>11</sup> Tit. i. 10, 11. <sup>12</sup> Matt. xxii. 23—33. Mark xii. 18—27. <sup>13</sup> Acts xxiii. 6, 8.

9—19. See this parable explained in Notes on Matt. xxi. 33—45.

20—38. See this explained in Matt. xxii. 16—33; and Mark xii. 13—27.

<sup>1</sup> unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy <sup>2</sup> to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

36 Neither <sup>3</sup> can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; <sup>4</sup> and are the <sup>5</sup> children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed <sup>6</sup> at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for <sup>7</sup> all live unto him.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxv. 5-8. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xxi. 36. Rev. iii. 4. <sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi. 4. <sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 49, 52. <sup>5</sup> 1 John iii. 2. <sup>6</sup> Rom. viii. 17. <sup>7</sup> Exod. vi. 2. <sup>8</sup> Rom. xiv. 8, 9.

39. See Mark xii. 32.

40-44. See Matt. xxii. 41-46.

45-47 See Matt. xxiii. 1-12, 14.

39 ¶ Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

40 And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.

41 And <sup>8</sup> he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?

42 And David himself saith <sup>9</sup> in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?

45 ¶ Then in the audience of <sup>10</sup> all the people he said unto his disciples,

46 Beware <sup>11</sup> of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings <sup>12</sup> in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

47 Which <sup>13</sup> devour widows' houses, and for a shew <sup>14</sup> make long prayers: the same shall receive greater <sup>15</sup> damnation.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*The widow's two mites, 1-4. The temple to be overthrown, 5, 6. The fore-warning signs, 7-38. Watchfulness taught, 34-38.*

AND he looked up, and <sup>16</sup> saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two <sup>17</sup> mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say

<sup>8</sup> Matt. xxii. 42. Mark xii. 35-37. <sup>9</sup> Ps. cx. 1. Acts ii. 34. <sup>10</sup> 1 Tim. v. 20. <sup>11</sup> Mark xii. 38-40. <sup>12</sup> Ch. xi. 43. <sup>13</sup> Isa. x. 2. Matt. xxiii. 14. <sup>14</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 6. <sup>15</sup> 1 Thess. ii. 5. <sup>16</sup> Ch. x. 12, 14. Jas. iii. 1. <sup>17</sup> Mark xii. 41. <sup>18</sup> See Mark xii. 42.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1-4. See this explained in Mark xii. 41-44.



unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more <sup>1</sup> than they all:

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

5 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,

6 *As for* these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which <sup>3</sup> there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

8 And he said, Take <sup>4</sup> heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and <sup>5</sup> the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 12.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv.    Mark xiii.  
<sup>3</sup> Ch. xix. 44.    <sup>4</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 3, 9, 10.    1 John  
iv. 1.    2 John 7.    <sup>5</sup> Rev. i. 3.

4. *Penury.* Poverty.

5. *Goodly stones.* Beautiful stones. Either referring to the large, square, and well-finished stones of which the eastern wall was built, or to the precious stones which might have been used in decorating the temple itself. See Notes on Mark xiii. 1. ¶ *Gifts.* This word properly denotes anything devoted or dedicated to God. Anciently warriors dedicated to their gods, the spoils of war, the shields, and helmets, and armour, and garments of those slain in battle. These were suspended in the temples. It would seem that something of this kind had occurred in the temple of Jerusalem, and that the people, to express their gratitude to God, had suspended on the pillars and porches of the temple gifts and offerings. Josephus mentions particularly a golden vine with which Herod the Great had adorned the columns of the temple. Ant. 13, 8.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be <sup>6</sup> not terrified: for these things must first come to pass: but the end is not by and by.

10 Then said he unto them, <sup>7</sup> Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom;

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, <sup>8</sup> being brought before kings <sup>9</sup> and rulers for my name's sake.

13 And <sup>10</sup> it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to <sup>11</sup> meditate before what ye shall answer:

15 For I will give you a mouth

<sup>6</sup> Prov. iii. 23, 26.    <sup>7</sup> Hag. ii. 22.    <sup>8</sup> Acts  
iv. 3; v. 16; xii. 4; xvi. 24.    Rev. ii. 10.  
<sup>9</sup> Acts xxv. 23.    <sup>10</sup> Phil. i. 28.    2 Thess. i. 5.  
<sup>11</sup> Ch. xii. 11.    Matt. x. 19.

6. See Matt. xxiv. 2.

7—36. The account of the destruction of Jerusalem contained in this chapter has been fully considered in the Notes on Matt. xxiv. All that will be necessary here will be an explanation of a few words that did not occur in that chapter.

9. *Commotions.* Insurrections. Subjects rising against their rulers.

11. *Fearful sights.* See Matt. xxiv. 7.

12, 13. *Synagogues and into prisons.* See Notes on Mark xiii. 9, 10.

14. *Settle it therefore in your hearts.* Fix it firmly in your minds, so firmly as to become a fixed principle, that you are always to depend on God for aid in all your trials. See Mark xiii. 11.

15. *A mouth.* Eloquence, ability to speak as the case may demand. ¶ *Give-say.* Speak against. They will not be able to reply to it, or to oppose the force of what you shall say.

and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay<sup>1</sup> nor resist.

16 And<sup>2</sup> ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and<sup>3</sup> some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated<sup>4</sup> of all men for my name's sake.

18 But<sup>5</sup> there shall not an hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience<sup>6</sup> possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

21 Then let them which are in

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi. 10. <sup>2</sup> Mic. vii. 5, 6. <sup>3</sup> Acts vii. 59; xli. 2; xxvi. 10. <sup>4</sup> Rev. ii. 13; vi. 9; xii. 11. <sup>5</sup> John xvii. 14. <sup>6</sup> Matt. x. 30. <sup>7</sup> Rom. v. 3. Heb. x. 36. Jas. i. 4.

18. *A hair of your head perish.* This is a proverbial expression, denoting that they should not suffer any essential injury. This was strikingly fulfilled in the fact that in the calamities of Jerusalem, there is reason to believe that no Christian suffered. Before those calamities came on the city, they had fled to Pella, a city on the east of the Jordan. See Notes on Matt. xxiv. 18.

19. *In your patience.* Rather, by your perseverance. The word patience here means constancy, perseverance, sustaining afflictions. ¶ *Possess ye your souls.* Some read here the future instead of the present of the verb rendered *possess*. The word *possess* means here to preserve or keep, and the word *souls* means lives. This passage may be thus translated: By persevering in bearing these trials, you will save your lives, or you will be safe; or, by persevering preserve your lives, i. e. do not yield to these calamities, but bear up under them, for he that endureth to the end the same shall be saved. Compare Matt. xxiv. 13.

22. *All things which are written may be fulfilled.* Judgment had been threatened by almost all the prophets against that wicked city. They had spoken of

Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all<sup>7</sup> things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 But woe unto them<sup>8</sup> that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem<sup>9</sup> shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times<sup>10</sup> of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

<sup>7</sup> Deut. xxviii. 25, 48. Dan. ix. 26, 27. Zech. xi. 6; xiv. 1, 2. <sup>8</sup> Lam. iv. 10. <sup>9</sup> Dan. xii. 7. Rev. xi. 2. <sup>10</sup> Rom. xi. 25.

its crimes, and threatened its ruin. Once God had destroyed Jerusalem, and carried the people to Babylon. But their crimes had been repeated when they returned, and God had again threatened their ruin. Particularly was this very destruction foretold by Daniel, ch. ix. 26, 27: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

24. *Shall fall, &c.* No less than one million one hundred thousand perished in the siege of Jerusalem. ¶ *Shall be led away captive.* More than ninety thousand were led into captivity. See Notes on Matt. xxiv. ¶ *Shall be trodden down by the Gentiles.* Shall be in possession of the Gentiles, be subject to them. The expression also implies that it shall be an oppressive subjection, as when a captive in war is trodden down under the feet of the conqueror. Anciently conquerors trod on the necks of those who were subdued by them. Josh. x. 24. 2 Sam. xxii. 41. Ezek. xxi. 29. The bondage of Jerusalem has been long and very oppressive. It was

25 ¶ And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress<sup>1</sup> of nations, with per-

<sup>1</sup> Dan. xii. 1.

for a long time under the dominion of the Romans, then of the Saracens, and is now under the Turks, and is aptly represented by a captive stretched on the ground whose neck is trodden by the foot of the conqueror. ¶ *Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* This passage has been understood very differently by different expositors. Some refer it to the time which the Romans who conquered it had dominion over it, as signifying that they should keep possession of it until a part of the pagans should be converted, when it should be rebuilt. Thus it was rebuilt by the emperor Adrian. Others suppose that it refers to the end of the world, when all the Gentiles shall be converted, and they shall cease to be Gentiles by all becoming Christians, meaning that it should always be desolate. Others that Christ meant to say that in the times of the millennium, when the gospel should spread universally, he would reign personally on earth, and that the Jews would return and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. This is the opinion of the Jews, and of many Christians. The meaning of the passage clearly is, 1. That Jerusalem should be completely destroyed. 2. That this should be done by Gentiles, i. e., by the Roman armies. 3. That this desolation should continue as long as God should allow them; as long as he should judge it proper, in a fit manner, to express his abhorrence of the crimes of the nation, i. e., until the times allotted to them by God for this desolation should be accomplished, without specifying how long that should be, or what should occur to the city after that. It may be rebuilt, and inhabited by converted Jews. Such a thing is possible, and the Jews naturally seek that as their home. But whether this be so or not, the time when the Gentiles, as such, shall have dominion over the city, is limited. Like all other cities on the earth, it will yet be brought under the influence of the gospel, and shall be inhabited by the true friends of God. Pagan, infidel, anti-christian dominion shall cease there; and it shall be again a

plexity;<sup>2</sup> the sea and the waves roaring;

26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxii. 4, 5. Mic. vii. 4.

place where God shall be worshipped in sincerity, a place even then of peculiar interest from the recollection of the events which have occurred there. How long it is to be before this occurs, is known only to him, who hath put the times and seasons in his own power, Acts i. 7.

25. See Matt. xxiv. 29. ¶ *Upon the earth distress of nations.* Some have proposed to render the word *earth* by *land*, confining it to Judea. It often has this reference, and there seems some propriety in so using it here. The word translated *distress* denotes anxiety of mind, such an anxiety as men have when they do not know what to do to free themselves from calamities; and it means that the calamities would be so great and overwhelming that they would not know what to do to escape. There would be a want of counsel, and deep anxiety at the impending evils. ¶ *With perplexity.* Rather, on account of their perplexity, or the desperate state of their affairs. The Syriac has it "perplexity or wringing of hands," which is a sign of deep distress and horror. ¶ *The sea and the waves roaring.* This is not to be understood literally, but as an image of great distress. Probably it is designed to denote that these calamities would come upon them like a deluge. As when in a storm the ocean roars, and wave rolls on wave and dashes against the shore, and each succeeding surge is more violent than the one that preceded it, so would the calamities come upon Judea. They would roll over the whole land, and each wave of trouble would be more violent than the one that preceded it, until the whole country would be desolate. The same image is also used in Isa. viii. 7, 8, and Rev. xii. 15.

26. *Men's hearts failing them.* This is an expression denoting the highest terror. The word rendered *failing* commonly denotes to die, and here it means that the terror would be so great that men would faint and be ready to die in view of the approaching calamities. And if this was true in respect to the judgments about to come upon Judea, how much more so

things which are coming on the earth: for the<sup>1</sup> powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming<sup>2</sup> in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption<sup>3</sup> draweth nigh.

29 And<sup>4</sup> he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 10-12. <sup>2</sup> Rev. i. 7; xiv. 14. Rom. viii. 23. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv. 32. Mark xiii. 28.

till it be in the day of judgment, when he wicked shall be arraigned before the Son of God, and when they shall have before them the prospect of the awful sufferings of hell, the pains and woes which shall continue for ever! It will be no wonder then if they call on the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of God, and if their hearts sink within them at the prospect of eternal suffering in hell.

28. *Your redemption draweth nigh.* See Matt. xxiv. 33. This is expressed in ver. 31 thus: "the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." That is, from that time God will signally build up his kingdom. It shall be fully established when the Jewish policy shall come to an end; when the temple shall be destroyed, and the Jews scattered abroad. Then the power of the Jews shall be at an end; they shall no longer be able to persecute you, and you shall be completely delivered from all these trials and calamities in Judea.

34. *Lest at any time your hearts be overcharged,* &c. The meaning of this verse is: Be continually expecting these things. Do not forget them, and do not be secure and satisfied with this life and be good things which it furnishes. Do not suffer yourselves to be drawn into the fashions of the world, to be conformed to its customs, to partake of its feasts and licentiousness, and so these calamities shall come when you least expect them.

selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33 Heaven<sup>5</sup> and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

34 ¶ And take heed<sup>6</sup> to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Isa. xl. 8; li. 6. <sup>6</sup> Rom. xiii. 12, 13. 1 Thess. v. 6, 8. 1 Pet. iv. 7. <sup>7</sup> Isa. xxviii. 1-3. 1 Cor. vi. 10.

And from this we may learn, what, alas! we may from the lives of many professing Christians, that there is need of cautioning them that they do not indulge in the festivities of this life, and forget that they are to die and come to judgment. How many, alas! who bear the christian name have forgotten this caution of the Saviour, and live as if their lives were secure, as if they feared not death, as if there were no heaven, and no judgment. Christians should feel that they are soon to die, and that their portion is not in this life, and, feeling this, they should be looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God. ¶ *Overcharged.* Literally, be made heavy, as is the case with those who have eaten and drunken too much. ¶ *Surfeiting.* Excessive eating and drinking, so as to oppress the body. Indulgence in the pleasures of the table. This word does not include intoxication, but merely indulgence in food and drink, though the food and drink should be in themselves lawful. ¶ *Drunkenness.* Intoxication, intemperance in drinking. The ancients were not acquainted with the poison that we chiefly use on which to become drunk. They had no distilled spirits. They became intoxicated on wine, and strong drink made of a mixture of dates, honey, &c. All nations have contrived some way to become intoxicated, to bring in folly and disease, and poverty, and death by drunkenness. And in nothing is the depravity of men more mani-

and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For <sup>1</sup> as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch <sup>2</sup> ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted <sup>3</sup> worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to <sup>4</sup> stand before <sup>5</sup> the Son of man.

37 And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thess. v. 2. <sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 10. <sup>3</sup> Rev. xvi. 15. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xvi. 13. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xx. 35. <sup>6</sup> Psa. i. 5. <sup>7</sup> Jude 24.

fest than in thus endeavouring to hasten the ravages of crime and death.

35. *As a snare.* In Matthew and Mark, Jesus compares the suddenness with which these calamities should come, to the deluge coming in the days of Noah. Here he likens it to a snare. Birds are caught by a snare, or net; it is sprung on them quickly, and when they are not expecting it. So, says he, shall these troubles come upon Judea. The figure is often used to denote the suddenness of calamities. Psa. lxi. 22; cxxiv. 7. Isa. xxiv. 17. Rom. xi. 9.

36. *To stand before the Son of man.* These approaching calamities are represented as the coming of the Son of man to judge Jerusalem for its crimes. Its inhabitants were so wicked that they were not worthy to stand before him, and would be condemned and be overthrown. To stand before him here denotes approbation, acquittal, favour, and is equivalent to saying that they would be free from these calamities, while they should come upon others. See Psa. i. 5; cxxx. 3. Rom. xiv. 4. Rev. vi. 17. Perhaps, also, there is a reference here to the day of judgment. See Notes on Matt. xxiv.

37, 38. See Matt. xxi. 17. ¶ *Came early in the morning.* He returned early from the mount of Olives, and taught in the temple. Our Saviour did not waste his mornings in idleness or sleep. He

the mount <sup>6</sup> that is called *the mount of Olives.*

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

## CHAPTER XXII.

*Conspiracy against Jesus, 1—6. Christ's last passover, 7—18. The Lord's supper instituted, 19—23. Strife for pre-eminence, 24—30. Peter forewarned and the disciples apprised of coming danger, 31—38. Christ's agony in the garden, 39—46. Jesus betrayed and taken, 47—53. Peter's denial of Christ, 54—62. Jesus abused at the high-priest's house, 63—71.*

NOW <sup>7</sup> the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

<sup>8</sup> John viii. 1, 2. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xxvi. 2. Mark xiv. 1, 2.

rose early and repaired to the temple. The people, also, flocked to the sanctuary to hear him. This example is at once an encouragement to early rising, and to the early worship of God. It is a reproof of those who spend the part of the day best fitted to devotion in unnecessary sleep. And it shows the propriety, where it can be done, of assembling early in the morning for prayer and the worship of God. Early prayer meetings have the countenance of the Saviour, and will be found to be eminently conducive to the promotion of religion. The whole example of Jesus goes to show the importance of beginning the day with God, and of lifting up the heart to him for direction and for the supply of our wants, and for preservation from temptation, before the mind is engrossed by the cares, and distracted by the perplexities, and led away by the temptations of this life. Commencing the day with God is like arresting evil at the fountain; prayer at any other time without this, is an attempt to arrest it, when it has swollen to a stream, and rolls on like a torrent. Let the day be begun with God, and the work of piety is easy. Let the world have the ascendancy in the morning, and it will be likely to have it also at noonday and at evening.

## CHAPTER XXII.

1, 2. See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 1, 2.

2 And <sup>1</sup> the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

3 ¶ Then <sup>2</sup> entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted <sup>3</sup> to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them <sup>4</sup> in the absence of the multitude.

7 ¶ Then came the day <sup>5</sup> of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And he sent Peter and John,

<sup>1</sup> Psa. li. 2. Acts iv. 27. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 14. Mark xiv. 10, 11. John xiii. 2, 27. <sup>3</sup> Zech. xi. 12. <sup>4</sup> Or, *Without tumult.* <sup>5</sup> Exod. xii. 6—18.

3. *Then entered Satan into Judas.* It is not necessary to suppose that Satan entered personally into the body of Judas, but only that he brought him under his influence; he filled his mind with an evil passion, and led him on to betray his Master. The particular passion of which Satan made use, was avarice, probably the native besetting sin of Judas. And to show now its exceeding evil and baseness, it was suffered to produce its appropriate effect, and led to the betraying and crucifixion of the Son of God. We may learn, also, that when Satan tempts men, he commonly does it by exciting and raising to the highest pitch their native passions. He does not make them act contrary to their nature, but leads them on to act out their proper disposition. ¶ *Satan.* The word properly means an adversary, or an accuser. It is the name which in the scriptures is commonly given to the prince or leader of evil spirits, and is given to him because he is the accuser or calumniator of the righteous; see Rev. xii. 10; compare Job i. 6—9, as well as because he is the adversary of God. ¶ *Being of the number of the twelve.* One of the twelve

saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11 And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

apostles. This greatly aggravated his crime. He should have been bound, therefore, by the most tender ties to Jesus. He was one of his family, long with him, and treated by him with every mark of kindness and confidence; and nothing could more enhance his guilt than thus to make use of his confidence for the commission of one of the basest of crimes.

4—6. *Chief priests and captains.* See note, Matt. xxvi. 14. See the account of the bargain which Judas made with them explained in the Notes on Matt. xxvi. 14—16, and Mark xiv. 10, 11. ¶ *Absence of the multitude.* The multitude, the people, were then favourable to Jesus. He had preached in the temple, and many of them believed that he was the Messiah. It was a hazardous thing, therefore, to take him by force, and in their presence, as they might rise and rescue him. Hence they sought to take him when he was away from the multitude; and as Judas knew of a place where he could be found alone, they were glad of the opportunity of so easily securing him.

7—13. See this passage explained in

14 And <sup>1</sup> when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, <sup>2</sup> With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until <sup>3</sup> it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 ¶ And <sup>4</sup> he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 20. Mark xiv. 17. <sup>2</sup> Or, I have heartily desired. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xiv. 15. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. Rev. xix. 9. <sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 24, 25.

the Notes on Matt. xxvi. 17—19, and Mark xiv. 12—16.

14. *When the hour was come.* The hour of eating the paschal lamb, which was in the evening. See Matt. xxvi. 20.

15. *With desire I have desired.* This is a Hebrew form of expression, and means, I have greatly desired. The reasons why he desired this we may suppose to have been: 1. That as he was about to leave them, he was desirous once of seeing them together, and of partaking with them of one of the religious privileges of the Jewish dispensation. Jesus was man as well as God; he never undervalued the religious rites of his country, or the blessings of social and religious intercourse; and there is no impropriety in supposing that even he might feel that his human nature might be prepared by the service of religion for his great and terrible sufferings. 2. He doubtless wished to take an opportunity to prepare them for his sufferings, and to impress upon them more fully the certainty that he was about to leave them, that they might be prepared for it. 3. We may also suppose that he particularly desired it, that he might institute for their use, and for the edification of all

gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

21 ¶ But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me <sup>5</sup> on the table.

22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: <sup>6</sup> but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 ¶ And <sup>7</sup> there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

<sup>5</sup> Psa. xli. 9. John xiii. 26. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xxiv. 46. Acts ii. 23; iv. 28. 1 Cor. xv. 3. <sup>7</sup> Ch. ix. 46. Mark ix. 34.

Christians, the supper which is called by his name, the Lord's supper. All his sufferings were the expression of love to his people; and he was desirous of testifying always his regard for their comfort and welfare. ¶ *Before I suffer.* Before I die.

16. *Until it be fulfilled.* See Matt. xxvi. 29.

17. *And he took the cup and gave thanks.* This was not the sacramental cup, for that was taken after supper. Ver. 20. This was one of the cups which were usually taken during the celebration of the passover, and pertained to that observance. After he had kept this in the usual manner, he instituted the supper which bears his name, using the bread and wine which had been prepared for the passover, and thus engrafted the Lord's supper on the passover, or superseded the passover by another ordinance, which was intended to be perpetual.

19, 20. See Matt. xxvi. 26—28.

21—23. See Matt. xxvi. 21—25.

24. *A strife.* A contention, or debate. ¶ *Which of them should be the greatest.* The apostles, in common with the Jews generally, had supposed that the Messiah would come as a temporal prince, and in

25 And he said unto them, The<sup>1</sup> kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But<sup>2</sup> ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx. 25. Mark x. 42. <sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. v. 2. 3 John 9, 10.

the manner of other princes of the earth; of course, that he would have officers of his government, ministers of state, &c. Their contention was founded on this expectation, and they were disputing which of them should be raised to the highest office. They had before had a similar contention. See Matt. xviii. 1; xx. 20—28. Nothing can be more humiliating than that the disciples should have had such contentions, and in such a time and place. That just as Jesus was contemplating his own death, and labouring to prepare them for it, they should strive and contend about offices and rank, shows how deeply seated is the love of power; how ambition will find its way into the most secret and sacred places; and how even the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus are sometimes actuated by this most base and wicked feeling.

25. *The kings of the Gentiles.* The kings of the nations, or of the earth. They do this, and it is to be expected of them, and it is right. Our Lord does not mean to say that it was wrong that there should be such authority among them, but that his kingdom was to be of a different character, and they were not to expect it there. ¶ *Over them.* That is, over the nations. ¶ *Are called benefactors.* The word *benefactor* is applied to one who bestows favour on another. It was applied to kings by way of compliment or flattery. Some of them might have been truly benefactors of their people, but this was by no means true of all. Yet it was applied to all, and especially to the Roman emperors. It is found applied to them often in the writings of Josephus and Philo.

26, 27. *But ye shall not be so.* Christ here takes occasion to explain the nature

27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? but<sup>3</sup> I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations<sup>4</sup>

29 And I appoint unto you a<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> John xlii. 13, 14. Phil. ii. 7. <sup>4</sup> Heb. iv. 15. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xli. 22. Matt. xxv. 34. 1 Cor. ix. 25. 1 Pet. v. 4.

of his kingdom. He assures them that it is established on different principles from kingdoms of the world; that titles, and power, and offices of pomp were not to be expected in his kingdom. He that would be most advanced in his kingdom, would be he that was most humble; and in order to show them this, he took a towel, and girded himself after the manner of a servant, and washed their feet, to show them what ought to be their feelings towards each other. See John xlii. 4—17. ¶ *He that sitteth at meat.* The master of the feast, or one of his guests. ¶ *But I am among you, &c.* This was said in connexion with his washing their feet. He showed them how they ought to feel and act toward each other. They ought, therefore, not to aim at office and power, but to be humble, and serve and aid one another.

28. *My temptations.* My trials, my humiliations, and my assaults from the power of Satan and a wicked world. ¶ *And I appoint unto you a kingdom.* He assures them here that they should have a kingdom, their expectations should be realized. They had continued with him; they had seen how he had lived, and to what trials he had been subjected; they had all along expected a kingdom, and he assures them that they should not be disappointed. ¶ *As my Father, &c.* They had seen how God had appointed a kingdom to him. It was not with pomp, and splendour, and external glory. But it was in poverty, want, persecution, and trial. So would he appoint to them a kingdom. They should surely possess it; but it would be not with external splendour, but by poverty and toil. The original word *appoint* has the force of a covenant or compact, and means that it



kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That <sup>1</sup> ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the <sup>2</sup> twelve tribes of Israel.

31 ¶ And the Lord said, Simon,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xix. 9.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 28.    1 Cor. vi. 2.    Rev. iii. 21.

should be surely or certainly done, or that he pledged himself to do it. All Christians shall enter into the kingdom of heaven after the manner of their Lord, through much tribulation. But though it shall be, as it was with him, by many tears and sorrows, yet they shall surely reach the place of their rest and the reward of heaven, for it is secured to them by the covenant pledge and faithfulness of their Lord and King.

30. See Matt. xix. 28.

31. *Simon. Peter.* Jesus, foreseeing the danger of Peter, and knowing that he was about to deny him, took occasion to forewarn him and put him on his guard, and also to furnish him with a solace when he should be brought to repentance. ¶ *Satan hath desired.* Satan is the prince of evil. One of his works is to try the faith of believers, to place temptations and trials in their way, that they may be tested. Thus God gave Job into his hands, that it might be seen whether he would be found faithful, or would apostatize. Job i. 7. -12. So Satan desired to have Peter in his hands, that he might also try him. And our Saviour, by this, intimates that trials were about to come upon Peter. ¶ *May sift you as wheat.* Grain was agitated or shaken in a kind of fan or sieve. The grain remained in the fan, and the chaff and dust were thrown off. So Christ says, that Satan desired to try Peter, to place trials and temptations before him, to agitate him, to see whether any thing of faith would remain, or whether all would not be found to be chaff, mere natural artifice and false professions.

32. *That thy faith fail not.* The word *faith*, here, seems to be used in the sense of religion, or attachment to Christ; and the words *fail not* mean utterly fail, or fail altogether; that is, apostatize. It is *true* that the courage of Peter failed. It

Simon, behold, Satan hath desired<sup>3</sup> to have you, that he may sift<sup>4</sup> you as wheat:

32 But I<sup>5</sup> have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen<sup>6</sup> thy brethren.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. v. 8.    <sup>4</sup> Am. ix. 9.    <sup>5</sup> John xvii. 9, 15.    Heb. vii. 25.    1 John ii. 1.    <sup>6</sup> Psa. li. 13.    John xxi. 15-17.

is true that he had not that immediate confidence in Jesus, and reliance on him, which he had before had. But the prayer of Jesus was, that he might not altogether apostatize from the faith. God heard Jesus always. John xi. 42. It follows, therefore, that every prayer which he ever offered was answered; and it follows that, as he asked here for a specific thing, that that thing was granted; and as he prayed that Peter's faith might not utterly fail, so it follows that there was no time in which Peter was not really a pious man. Far as he wandered, and grievously as he sinned, yet he well knew that Jesus was the Messiah; he did 'know the man'; and though his fears overcame him, and led him to aggravated sin, yet the prayer of Christ was prevalent, and he was brought to true repentance. ¶ *When thou art converted.* The word *converted* means turned, changed, recovered. The meaning is, when thou art turned from this sin; when thou art recovered from this heinous offence, then use your experience to warn and strengthen those who are in danger of like sins. A man may be converted or turned from any sin or any evil course. He is regenerated but once, at the beginning of his Christian life; he may be converted as often as he falls into sin. ¶ *Strengthen thy brethren.* Confirm them, warn them, or encourage them. They are in continual danger also of sinning. Use your experience to warn them of their danger, and to comfort and sustain them in their trials. And from this we learn, 1. That one design of permitting Christians to fall into sin is to show their weakness and dependence on God; and, 2. That they who have been overtaken in this manner should make use of their own experience to warn and preserve others from the same path. The two Epistles of Peter, and his whole life, show that he was attentive to this command of Jesus:

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. viii. 12, 13. Prov. xxviii. 26. Jer. x. 23; xvii. 9. <sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 3; x. 4. Matt. x. 9, 10. Mark vi. 8, 9.

and in his death he manifested his deep abhorrence of this act of dreadful guilt in denying his blessed Lord, by requesting to be crucified with his head downwards, as unworthy to suffer in the same manner that Christ did.

33, 34. See Matt. xxvi. 33—35.

35. *When I sent you, &c.* See Matt. x. 9, 10. ¶ *Lacked ye, &c.* Did you want any thing! Did not God fully provide for you! He refers to this to convince them that his words were true; that their past experience should lead them to put confidence in him and in God.

36. *But now.* The Saviour says the times are changed. Before, he sent them out only for a little time. They were in their own country. Their journeys would be short, and there was no need that they should make preparation for a long absence, nor for encountering great dangers. But now they were to go into the wide world, among strangers, trials, dangers, and wants. And as the time was near, as he was about to die, and as these dangers pressed on, it was proper that they should make provision for what was before them. ¶ *A purse.* See Matt. x. 9. He intimates that they should now take money, as it would be necessary to provide for their wants in travelling. ¶ *Scrip.* See Matt. x. 10. ¶ *And he that hath no record.* There has been much difficulty in understanding why Jesus directed his disciples to arm themselves, as if it was his purpose to make a defence. It is certain that the spirit of his religion is against the use of the sword, and that it was not his purpose to defend himself against Judas. But it should be remembered that these directions about the purse, the scrip, and the sword, were not made with reference to his being taken in the garden, but with reference to their

and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written<sup>3</sup> must yet be accom-

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xxiii. 32. Isa. liii. 12. Mark xv. 27, 28. <sup>2</sup> Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13.

plished. The time of the trial in Gethsamane was just at hand. Nor was there time then, if no other reason existed, to go and make the purchase. It altogether refers to their future life. They were going into the midst of dangers. The country was infested with robbers and wild beasts. It was customary to go armed. And he tells them of those dangers, of the necessity of being prepared in the usual way to meet them. This, then, is not to be considered as a specific positive command to procure a sword, but an intimation that great dangers were before them; their manner of life would be changed, and they would need the provisions appropriate to that kind of life. The common preparations for that manner of life were money, provisions, and arms. And he foretells them of that manner of life by giving them directions commonly understood to be appropriate to it. It amounts, then, to a prediction that they would soon leave the places they had been accustomed to, and go into scenes of poverty, want, and danger, where they would feel the necessity of money, provisions, and the means of defence. All, therefore, that the passage justifies is, 1. That it is proper for men to provide beforehand for their wants, and for ministers and missionaries as well as any other. 2. That self-defence is lawful. Men, encompassed with dangers, may lawfully defend their lives. It does not prove that it is lawful to make offensive war on a nation or an individual. ¶ *Let him sell his garment.* His mantle, or his outer garment. See Matt. v. 40. The meaning is, let him procure one at any expense, even if he is obliged to sell his clothes for it, intimating that the dangers would be very great and pressing.

37. This that is written. Isa. liii. 12.—585

plished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: of the things concerning me have an end.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

39 ¶ And <sup>1</sup> he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 36. Mark xiv. 32—42. John xviii. 1—14.

¶ *Was reckoned among the transgressors.* Not reckoned as a transgressor, but among or with them. That is, he was treated as transgressors are. He was put to death in their company, and as he would have been if he had been a transgressor. He was innocent, holy, harmless, and undefiled. Heb. vii. 26. God knew this always, and could not think of him, or make him to be, otherwise than he was. Yet it pleased him to bruise him, and to give him into the hands of men who did reckon him as a transgressor, and who treated him accordingly. ¶ *Have an end.* This may either mean, shall be surely accomplished, or they are about to be fulfilled, or are now fulfilled. The former is probably the meaning, denoting that every prophecy in regard to him should certainly be accomplished.

38. *Are two swords.* The Galileans, it is said, often went armed. The Essenes did so also. The reason was that the country was full of robbers and wild beasts, and it was necessary to carry in their travels some means of defence. It seems that the disciples followed the customs of the country, and had with them some means of defence, though they had but two swords among the twelve. ¶ *It is enough.* It is difficult to understand this. Some suppose that it is spoken ironically. As if he had said, You are bravely armed indeed; with two swords among twelve men, and to meet such a host. Others, that he meant to reprove them for understanding him literally, as if he meant that they were then to pro-

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be <sup>2</sup> willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel <sup>3</sup> unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And <sup>4</sup> being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

<sup>2</sup> *Willing to remove.* <sup>3</sup> Matt. iv. 11. <sup>4</sup> Luc. i. 12. John xii. 27. Heb. v. 7.

cure swords for immediate battle. As if he had said, This is absurd, or a perversion of my meaning. I did not intend this, but merely to forestall you of impending dangers after my death. It is to be observed that he did not say, the two swords are enough, but it is enough; perhaps meaning simply, enough has been said. Other matters press on, and you will yet understand what I mean.

39—46. See Matt. xxvi. 30—46. Mark xiv. 26—42.

43. *Strengthening him.* His human nature, to sustain the great burden that was upon his soul. Some have supposed from this that he was not divine as well as human; for if he was God, how could an angel give any strength or comfort, and why did not the divine nature alone sustain the human? But the fact that he was divine does not affect the case at all. It might be asked with the same propriety, if he was, as all admit, the friend of God, and beloved of God, and holy, why, if he was a mere man, did not God sustain him alone, without an angel's intervening? But the objection would have no force in either case. The man, Christ Jesus, was suffering. His human nature was in agony; and it is the manner of God to sustain the afflicted by the intervention of others. Nor was there any more unfitness in sustaining the human nature of his Son in this manner, than any other sufferer.

44. *In an agony.* See this verse explained in the Notes on Matt. xxvi. 42—44.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, <sup>1</sup> lest ye enter into temptation.

47 ¶ And while he yet spake, behold <sup>2</sup> a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 ¶ And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 40. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 47—52. Mark xiv. 43—56. John xviii. 3—14.

45. *Sleeping for sorrow.* On account of the greatness of their sorrow. See Matt. xxvi. 40.

47—53. See this explained in Matt. xxvi. 48—56.

48. *Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* By the Son of man was evidently meant there the Messiah. Judas had had the most satisfactory evidence of that, and did not doubt it. A kiss was the sign of affection. By that slight artifice Judas thought to conceal his base purpose. Jesus, with severity, reproaches him for it. Every word is emphatic. *Betrayest thou—dost thou violate all thy obligations of fidelity, and deliver thy Master up to death! Betrayest thou—*

53. When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour,<sup>3</sup> and the power of darkness.

54 ¶ Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But <sup>4</sup> a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while <sup>5</sup> another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after another <sup>6</sup> confidently affirmed, saying Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know

<sup>3</sup> Job xx. 5. John xii. 27. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvi. 69. Mark xiv. 66, 67. John xviii. 17. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxvi. 71. Mark xiv. 68. John xviii. 25. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvi. 73. Mark xiv. 70. John xviii. 26.

thou, so long with him, so much favoured, so sure that this is the Messiah! Betrayest thou the Son of man—the Messiah, the hope of the nations, the desire of all people, the world's Redeemer! Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss—the sign of friendship and affection, employed in a base and wicked purpose, intending to add deceit, disguise, and a prostitution of a mark of affection, to the crime of treason! Every word of this must have gone to the very soul of Judas! Perhaps few reproofs of crime more resemble the awful searchings of the souls of the wicked in the day of judgment!

54—62. See Matt. xxvi. 57—75.

not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And <sup>1</sup> Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before <sup>2</sup> the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And <sup>3</sup> Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

63 ¶ And <sup>4</sup> the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

66 ¶ And <sup>5</sup> as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,

67 Art thou <sup>6</sup> the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 75. Mark xiv. 72. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 34. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxxx. 1-4; cxliii. 1-4. Jer. xxxi. 18. Ezek. vii. 16. <sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. x. 12; 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. Mark xiv. 65. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 20-28. <sup>7</sup> Matt. xxvi. 63-68. Mark xiv. 61-65.

63-71. See Notes on Matt. xxvi. 57-68.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

1. See Matt. xxvii. 1, 2.

2. *This fellow.* The word *fellow* is not in the original. It conveys a notion of contempt, which no doubt they felt, but which is not expressed in the Greek, and which it is not proper should be expressed in the translation. It might be translated, We found this man. ¶ *Perverting the nation.* That is, exciting them to sedition and tumults. This was a mere wanton accusation, but it was plausible before a Roman magistrate: For, 1. The Galileans, as Josephus testi-

68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let us go.

69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand <sup>7</sup> of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

*Jesus accused before Pilate, 1-5. Sent to Herod, 6-12. Declared innocent by Pilate, 13-22. Given up to clamour, 23-26. The coming ruin of Jerusalem, 27-31. The crucifixion, 32-38. The malefactor converted, 39-45. Christ's death and burial, 46-56.*

AND <sup>8</sup> the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

2 And they began to accuse <sup>9</sup> him, saying, We found this *fellow*<sup>10</sup> perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute<sup>11</sup> to Cæsar, saying that he <sup>12</sup> himself is Christ <sup>3</sup> King.

<sup>7</sup> Heb. i. 3; viii. 1. Rev. iii. 21. <sup>8</sup> Matt. xxvii. 2, 11-18. Mark xv. 1-14. John xviii. 28-40. <sup>9</sup> Zech. xl. 8. <sup>10</sup> Ver. 5. Acts xvi. 20, 21; xvii. 6, 7. <sup>11</sup> Matt. xvii. 27; xxii. 21. Mark xii. 17. <sup>12</sup> John xviii. 30; xix. 12.

fies, were prone to seditions and tumults. 2. Jesus drew multitudes after him, and they thought it was easy to show that this was itself promoting tumults and seditions. ¶ *Forbidding, &c.* About their charges they were very cautious and cunning. They did not say that he taught that men should not give tribute. That would have been too gross a charge, and would have been easily refuted. But it was an inference which they drew. They said it followed from his doctrine. He professed to be a king. They inferred, therefore, if he was a king, that he must hold that it was not right to acknowledge allegiance to any foreign prince. And if they could make this out, they supposed that Pilate

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And <sup>1</sup> he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no <sup>2</sup> fault in this man.

5 And they were the more fierce, <sup>3</sup> saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean.

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's <sup>4</sup> jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 13. <sup>2</sup> John xviii. 38; xix. 4. Heb. vii. 26. <sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 22. <sup>4</sup> Psa. lvi. 4. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiii. 1.

must condemn him of course. ¶ *Tribute Taxes.* ¶ *Cæsar.* The Roman emperor, called also Tiberius. The name *Cæsar* was common to the Roman emperors, as Pharaoh was to the Egyptian kings. All the kings of Egypt were called Pharaoh, or the Pharaoh; so all the Roman emperors were called Cæsar.

3. See Matt. xxvii. 11.

4. *I find no fault.* I see no evidence that he is guilty of what you charge him with. This was after Pilate had taken Jesus into the judgment hall by himself, and examined him privately, and been satisfied in regard to the nature of his kingdom. See John xviii. 33—38. He was then satisfied that though he claimed to be a king, yet his kingdom was not of this world; and that his claims did not interfere with those of Cæsar.

5. *The more fierce.* The more urgent and pressing. They saw there was a prospect of losing their cause, and they attempted to press on Pilate the point that would be most likely now to affect him. Pilate had in fact acquitted him of the charge of being an enemy to Cæsar, and they therefore urged the other point more vehemently. ¶ *Stirreth up the people.* Excites them to tumult and sedition.

8 ¶ And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for <sup>5</sup> he was desirous to see him of a long season, because <sup>6</sup> he had heard many things of him; and <sup>7</sup> he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but <sup>8</sup> he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought,<sup>9</sup> and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe,<sup>10</sup> and sent him again to Pilate.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. ix. 9. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xiv. 1. Mark vi. 14. <sup>7</sup> Ch. iv. 23. <sup>8</sup> 2 Kin. v. 3—6, 11. Acts viii. 19. <sup>9</sup> Psa. xxxviii. 13, 14; xxxix. 1, 9. Isa. liii. 7. <sup>10</sup> Isa. xlix. 7; liii. 3. <sup>11</sup> John xix. 5.

¶ *All Jewry.* All Judea. ¶ *From Galilee to this place.* To Jerusalem. That is, throughout the whole country. It is not merely in one place, but from one end of the land to another.

6. *Whether he were a Galilaean.* He asked this because, if he was, he properly belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, who reigned over Galilee.

7. *Herod's jurisdiction.* Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. This was the same Herod that put John the Baptist to death. Jesus had passed the most of his life in the part of the country where he ruled, and it was therefore considered that he belonged to his jurisdiction; that is, that it belonged to Herod, not to Pilate, to try this cause.

10. *Vehemently accused him.* Violently or unjustly accused him, endeavouring to make it appear that he had been guilty of sedition in Herod's province.

11. *Herod, with his men of war.* With his soldiers, or his body guard. It is probable that in travelling he had a guard to attend him constantly. ¶ *Set him at nought.* Treated him with contempt and ridicule. ¶ *A gorgeous robe.* A white or shining robe, for this is the meaning of

12 ¶ And the same day Pilate and <sup>1</sup> Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 ¶ And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and,

<sup>1</sup> Acts. iv. 27.

the original. The Roman princes wore purple robes, and Pilate therefore put such a robe on Jesus. The Jewish kings wore a white robe, which was often rendered very shining or gorgeous by much tinsel or silver interwoven. Josephus says that the robe which Agrippa wore was so bright with silver, that when the sun shone on it, it so dazzled the eyes that it was difficult to look on it. The Jews and Romans, therefore, decked him in the manner appropriate to their own country, for purposes of mockery. All this was unlawful and malicious, as there was not the least evidence of his guilt. ¶ Sent him to Pilate. It was by the interchange of these civilities that they were made friends. It would seem that Pilate sent him to Herod as a token of civility and respect, and with a design perhaps of putting an end to their quarrel. Herod returned the civility, and it resulted in their reconciliation.

12. *Made friends together, &c.* What had been the cause of their quarrel is unknown. It is commonly supposed that it was Pilate's slaying the Galileans in Jerusalem, as related in Luke xiii. 1, 2. The occasion of their reconciliation seems to have been the civility and respect which Pilate showed to Herod in this case. It was not because they were united in hating Jesus, as is often the case with wicked men, for Pilate was certainly desirous of releasing him, and both considered him merely as an object of ridicule and sport. It is true, however, that wicked men, at variance in other things, are often united in opposing and ridiculing Christ and his followers; and that enmities of long standing are sometimes made up, and the most opposite characters brought together simply to oppose religion. Compare Psal. lxxxiii. 5—7.

behold, I <sup>2</sup> having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

16 I will therefore chastise <sup>3</sup> him, and release him.

¶ Ver. 4. ¶ Isa. liii. 5.

15. *Worthy of death.* Deserving of death. The charges are not proved against him. They had had every opportunity of proving them, first before Pilate, and then before Herod, unjustly subjecting him to trial before two men in succession, and thus giving them a double opportunity of condemning him, and yet after all he was declared by both to be innocent. There could be no better evidence that he was innocent.

16. *I will therefore chastise him.* The word *chastise* here means to scourge, or to whip. This was usually done before capital punishment, to increase the sufferings of the man condemned. It is not easy to see the reason why, if Pilate supposed Jesus to be innocent, he should propose publicly to scourge him. It was as really unjust to do that as it was to crucify him. But probably he expected by this to conciliate the minds of his accusers; to show them that he was willing to gratify them if it could be done with propriety; and perhaps he expected that by seeing him whipped and disgraced, and condemned to ridicule, and contempt, and suffering, they would be satisfied. It is further remarked, that among the Romans it was competent for a magistrate to inflict a slight punishment on a man when a charge of gross offence was not fully made out, or where there was not sufficient testimony to substantiate the precise charge alleged. All this shows, 1. The palpable injustice of our Lord's condemnation, 2. The persevering malice and obstinacy of the Jews. And, 3. The want of firmness in Pilate. He should have released him at once, but the love of popularity led him to the murder of the Son of God. Man should do his duty in all situations, and he that, like Pilate, seeks only for public favour and

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas :

19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, <sup>1</sup> was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him : I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

23 And they were instant <sup>2</sup> with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

24 And Pilate <sup>3</sup> gave sentence that it should be as they <sup>4</sup> required.

25 And he released unto them <sup>5</sup> him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they

<sup>1</sup> Acts iii. 14. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 5. Psa. xxii. 12. <sup>3</sup> Or, assented. <sup>4</sup> Exod. xxiii. 2. <sup>5</sup> Acts iii. 14.

popularity, will assuredly be led into crime.

17. See Matt. xxvii. 15.

18—23. See Matt. xxvii. 20—23.

23—25. See Matt. xxvii. 26.

26. See Matt. xxvii. 32. ¶ *After Jesus.* Probably to hear one end of the cross. Jesus was feeble and unable to bear it alone, and they compelled Simon to help him.

28. *Daughters of Jerusalem.* Women of Jerusalem. This was a common mode of speaking among the Hebrews. ¶ *Weep for yourselves,* &c. This refers to the calamities that were about to come upon them in the desolation of their city by the Romans.

30. *To the mountains, Fall on us, &c.* This is an image of great calamities and judgments. So great will be the calamities, that they will seek for shelter from

had desired ; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 And <sup>6</sup> as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

27 ¶ And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 For, behold, the days <sup>7</sup> are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

30 Then <sup>8</sup> shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us ; and to the hills, Cover us.

31 For <sup>9</sup> if they do these things

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvii. 32—38. Mark xv. 21—25. John xix. 17. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xxi. 23. Matt. xxiv. 19. <sup>8</sup> Isa. ii. 19. Hos. x. 8. Rev. vi. 16 ; ix. 6. <sup>9</sup> Prov. xi. 31. Jer. xxv. 29. Esak. xx. 47 ; xxi. 4. 1 Pet. iv. 17.

the storm, and will call on the hills to protect them. The same figure is used respecting the wicked in the day of judgment in Rev. vi. 16, 17.

31. *For if they do these things in a green tree, &c.* This seems to be a proverbial expression. A green tree is one that is not easily set on fire. A dry one is easily kindled, and burns rapidly. By a green tree is represented evidently a man of truth and purity. And the meaning of the passage is : If they, the Romans, do these things to me, who am innocent and blameless, if they punish me in this manner in the face of justice, what will they not do in relation to this guilty nation ? What security have they that heavier judgments will not come upon them ? What desolations and woes may not be expected when injustice and oppression have taken the place of justice.



in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

32 And there were also two other, malefactors,<sup>1</sup> led with him to be put to death.

33 And when they were come to the place, which is called<sup>2</sup> Calvary,

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 12. Matt. xxvii. 38. Mark xv. 27, 28. John xix. 18. Heb. xii. 2. <sup>2</sup> Or, the place of a skull.

and have set up a rule over this wicked people? Our Lord alludes evidently to the calamities that would come upon them by the Romans in the destruction of their city and temple. The passage may be applied, however, without impropriety, and with great beauty and force, to the punishment of the wicked in the future world. Thus applied, it means that the sufferings of the Saviour compared with the sufferings of the guilty, were like the burning of a green tree compared with the burning of one that is dry. A green tree is not adapted to burn. A dry one is. So the Saviour, innocent, pure, and holy, stood in relation to sufferings. There were sufferings which an innocent being could not endure. There was remorse of conscience, the sense of guilt, punishment properly so called, and the eternity of woes. He had the consciousness of innocence, and he would not suffer for ever. He had no passions to enkindle that would rage and ruin the soul. The sinner is adapted to suffering, like a dry tree to the fire. He is guilty, and will suffer all the horrors of remorse of conscience. He will be punished literally. He has raging and impetuous passions, and they will be enkindled in hell, and will rage for ever and ever. The meaning is, that if the innocent Saviour suffered so much, the sufferings of the sinner for ever in hell must be more unspeakably dreadful. Yet who could endure the sufferings of the Redeemer on the cross for a single day? Who could bear them for ever and ever, aggravated by all the horrors of a guilty conscience, and all the terrors of unrestrained anger, and hate, and fear, and wrath? Why will the wicked die?

32, 33. See Matt. xxvii. 35, 38.

34. Father, forgive them. This is a fulfilment of the prophecy in Isa. liii. 12: "He made intercession for the trans-

gressors." The prayer was offered for those who were guilty of putting him to death. It is not quite certain whether he referred to the Jews, or to the Roman soldiers. Perhaps he referred to both. The Romans knew not what they did, as they were really ignorant that Jesus was the Son of God, and were obeying the command of their rulers. The Jews knew indeed that he was innocent, and they had evidence, if they would have looked at it, that he was the Messiah, but they did not know what would be the effect of their guilt; they did not know what judgments and calamities they were bringing down upon their country. It may be added, also, that though they had abundant evidence, if they would look at it, that he was the Messiah, and enough to leave them without excuse, yet they did not in fact believe that he was the Saviour promised by the prophets, and had not in fact any proper sense of his rank and dignity as the Lord of glory. If they had had, they would not have crucified him, as we cannot suppose they would knowingly put to death their own Messiah, the hope of the nation, and him who had been so long promised to the fathers. See Notes on 1 Cor. ii. 8. We may learn from this prayer: 1. The duty of praying for our enemies, even when they are endeavouring most to injure us. 2. The thing for which we should pray for them is that God would pardon them, and give them better minds. 3. The power and excellence of the Christian religion. No other religion teaches men to pray for the forgiveness of enemies, or disposes them so to pray. Men of the world seek for revenge: the Christian bears reproaches and persecutions with patience, and prays that God would pardon his foes and save them from their sins. 4. The greatest sinners through the intercession of Jesus may obtain pardon. God heard

34 ¶ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 44. Acts vii. 60. 1 Cor. iv. 12.

35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them <sup>1</sup> derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription <sup>2</sup> also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 14. Gen. xxxvii. 19, 20. Psa. xlii. 7; xxxv. 15, 19—21, 25, 26. Isa. xlix. 7; lili. 3. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii. 11, 37. Mark xv. 18, 26, 32. John xix. 3, 19—22.

him, and still hears him always, and there is no reason to doubt that many of his enemies and murderers obtained forgiveness and life. Compare Acts ii. 37, 42, 43; vi. 7; xiv. 1. ¶ *They know not what they do.* It was done through ignorance. Acts iii. 17. Paul says that "had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." 1 Cor. ii. 8. Ignorance does not excuse altogether a crime if the ignorance be wilful, but it diminishes its guilt. They had evidence, they might have learned his character, and might have known what they were doing. And thus they might be held answerable for all this. But Jesus here shows the compassion of his heart, and as they were really ignorant, whatever might be the cause of their ignorance, yet he implores God to pardon them. He even urges it as a reason why they should be pardoned that they were ignorant of what they were doing. And though men are often guilty for their ignorance, yet God often looks in compassion over it, averts his anger, and grants them blessings of pardon and life. So he forgave Paul, for he "did it in ignorance, in unbelief." 1 Tim. i. 13. So God winked at the ignorance of the Gentiles. Acts xvii. 30. Yet this is no excuse, and no evidence of safety, for those who in our day contemptuously put away from them and their children the means of instruction.

35—39. See Matt. xxvii. 41—44.

38. *In letters of Greek, &c.* See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 37.

THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 ¶ And one <sup>3</sup> of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear <sup>4</sup> God, seeing thou art in the same <sup>5</sup> condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing <sup>6</sup> amiss.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvii. 34—36. Matt. xxvii. 44. <sup>4</sup> Psa. xxxvi. 1. <sup>5</sup> Jer. v. 3. <sup>6</sup> 1 Pet. i. 19.

39. *One of the malefactors.* Matthew, ch. xxvii. 44, says, "the thieves—cast the same in his teeth." See the apparent contradiction in these statements reconciled in the Notes on that place. ¶ *If thou be Christ.* If thou art the Messiah; if thou art what thou dost pretend to be. This is a taunt or reproach of the same kind as that of the priests in verse 35. ¶ *Save thyself and us.* Save our lives. Deliver us from the cross. This man did not seek for salvation truly; he asked not to be delivered from his sins; if he had, Jesus would also have heard him. Men often in sickness and affliction call upon God. They are earnest in prayer. They ask of God to save them, but it is only to save them from temporal death. It is not to be saved from their sins, and the consequence is that when God does raise them up they forget their promises, and live as they did before, as this robber would have done, if Jesus had heard his prayer, and delivered him from the cross.

40. *Dost not thou fear God, &c.* You are condemned to die as well as he. It is improper for you to rail on him as the rulers and Romans do. God is just, and you are hastening to his bar, and you should therefore fear him, and fear that he will punish you for railing on this innocent man. ¶ *Same condemnation.* Condemnation to death, not death for the same thing, but the same kind of death.

41. *Due reward of our deeds.* The proper punishment for our crimes. They

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember <sup>1</sup> me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cvi. 4, 5. Rom. x. 9, 10. 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11.

had been highwaymen, and it was just that they should die.

42. *Remember me.* This is a phrase praying for favour, or asking him to grant him an interest in his kingdom, or to acknowledge him as one of his followers. It implied that he believed that Jesus was what he claimed to be, the Messiah; that though he was dying with them, yet he would set up his kingdom, and that he had full power to bless him, though about to expire. It is possible that this man might have heard him preach before his crucifixion, and have learned there the nature of his kingdom, or it is possible that while on the cross Jesus had taken occasion to acquaint them with the nature of his kingdom. While he might have been doing this, one of the malefactors might have continued to rail on him while the other became truly penitent. Such a result of preaching the gospel would not have been unlike what has often occurred since, where, while the gospel has been proclaimed, one has been taken and another left; one has been melted to repentance, another has been more hardened in guilt. The promise which follows shows that this prayer was answered. This was a case of repentance in the last hours, the trying hours of death. And it has been remarked that one was brought to repentance there, to show that no one should despair on a dying bed; and but one, that none should be presumptuous and delay repentance to that awful moment. ¶ *When thou comest, &c.* It is impossible now to fix the precise idea which this robber had of Christ's coming. Whether it be that he expected that he would rise from the dead, as some of the Jews supposed the Messiah would, or whether he referred to the day of judgment, or whether to an immediate translation to his kingdom in the heavens, we cannot tell: all that we know is that he fully believed him to be the Messiah, and that he desired to obtain an interest in that kingdom which he knew he would establish.

43. *To-day, &c.* It is not probable

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily <sup>2</sup> I say unto thee, To-day thou shalt be with me in <sup>3</sup> paradise.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v. 20, 21. <sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 4. Rev. ii. 7.

that the dying thief expected that his prayer would be so soon answered. It is rather to be supposed that he looked to some future period when the Messiah would rise, or would return. But Jesus told him that his prayer would soon be answered, implying evidently that it would be immediately at death. This is the more remarkable as those who were crucified commonly lingered for several days on the cross before they died. But Jesus foresaw that measures would be taken to hasten their death, and assured him that that day he should receive as answer to his prayer, and be with him in his kingdom. ¶ *Paradise.* This is a word of Persian origin, and means a garden, and particularly a garden of pleasure, filled with trees, and shrubs, and fountains, and flowers. In hot climates such gardens were peculiarly pleasant, and hence they were attached to the mansions of the rich, and to the palaces of princes. Hence the word is used to denote any place of happiness, and particularly the abodes of the blessed in another world. The Romans spoke of their Elysium, and the Greeks of the gardens of Hesperides where the trees bore golden fruit. The garden of Eden means also the garden of pleasure; and in Gen. ii. 8, the Septuagint renders the word Eden by Paradise. Hence this name in the scriptures indicates the abodes of the blessed in the other world. See Notes on 2 Cor. xii. 4. The Jews supposed that the souls of the righteous would be received into such a place, and those of the wicked cast down to Gehenna until the time of the judgment. The Jews had many fables about this state which it is unnecessary to repeat. The plain meaning of the passage is, to-day thou shalt be made happy, or be received to a state of blessedness with me after death; and it is to be remarked that Christ says nothing about the place where it should be, nor of the condition of those there, excepting that it is a place of blessedness, and that its happiness is to commence immediately after death. See

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all <sup>1</sup> the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 ¶ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into <sup>2</sup> thy hands I commend my spirit: and <sup>3</sup> having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar <sup>4</sup> off, beholding these things.

50 ¶ And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and *he was* a good man, and a just:

51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathæa, a city of the

<sup>1</sup> Or, land. <sup>2</sup> Ps. cxxi. 5. <sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 23. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvii. 50—54. Mark xv. 37, 38. John xix. 30. <sup>5</sup> Ps. xxxviii. 11; cxlii. 4.

also Phil. i. 23. But from the narrative we may learn; 1. That the soul will exist separately from the body, for while the thief and the Saviour would be in paradise, their bodies would be on the cross or in the grave. 2. That immediately after death, the same day, the souls of the righteous will be made happy. They will feel that they are secure, they will be received among the just, and they will have the assurance of the future resurrection and of a glorious immortality. 3. That state will differ from the condition of the wicked. The promise was made but to one on the cross, and there is no evidence whatever that the other entered there. See also the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Luke xvi. 19—31. 4. It is the chief glory of this

Jews: who <sup>5</sup> also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

52 This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, <sup>6</sup> and laid it in a <sup>7</sup> sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And that day was the <sup>8</sup> preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

55 And the women <sup>9</sup> also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

56 And they returned, and <sup>10</sup> prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath-day according <sup>11</sup> to the commandment.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

*The women go to the sepulchre and find that Jesus had risen, 1—10. The eleven incredulous, 11, 12. Christ's appearance to two disciples on the way to Emmaus, 13—35. Christ's appearance to the eleven, 36—49. Ascension from Bethany, 50—53.*

NOW <sup>12</sup> upon the first day of the week, very early in the morn-

<sup>5</sup> Ch. ii. 25, 38. Mark xv. 43. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvii. 59, 60. Mark xv. 46. <sup>7</sup> Isa. liii. 9. <sup>8</sup> Matt. xxvii. 62. <sup>9</sup> Ver. 49; ch. viii. 2. <sup>10</sup> Matt. xvi. 1. <sup>11</sup> Exod. xx. 8—10. <sup>12</sup> Matt. xxviii. 1—8. Mark xvi. 2—8. John xx. 1—10.

state, and of heaven, to be permitted to see Jesus Christ, and to be with him. Thou shalt be with me. I desire to depart, and to be with Christ. Phil. i. 23. See also Rev. v. 9—14, 23; xxi. 23.

44—46. See Matt. xxvii. 45—50.  
47—49. See Matt. xxvii. 52—55.

48. *The things which were done.* The earthquake, and darkness, and the sufferings of Jesus. ¶ *Smote their breasts.* In token of alarm, fear, and anguish. They saw the judgments of God; they saw the guilt of the rulers; and they feared the further displeasure of the Almighty.

50—56. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 57—61. Mark xv. 42—47.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

1—12. See Notes on Matt. xxviii. 1—11.

ing, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold,<sup>1</sup> two men stood by them in shining garments :

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye<sup>2</sup> the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen : remember how he spake<sup>3</sup> unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words,

<sup>1</sup> John xx. 12. Acts i. 10. <sup>2</sup> Or, *him that liveth*. Rev. i. 18. <sup>3</sup> Ch. ix. 22. Matt. xvi. 21 ; xvii. 23. Mark viii. 31 ; ix. 31. John ii. 22.

13. *Two of them.* Two of the disciples. The name of one of them was Cleopas, ver. 18. Many have supposed that the other was Luke, and that he omitted his own name from modesty. Others have supposed that it was Peter. See ver. 35. 1 Cor. xv. 5. There is no evidence to guide us here. Dr. Lightfoot has shown that Cleopas is the same name as Alphæus, who was the father of the apostle James. Matt. x. 3. ¶ *Emmaus.* There were two places of this name, one of which was afterwards called Nicopolis, and was near the sea of Tiberias. The place here mentioned was situated to the west of Jerusalem. ¶ *Three-score furlongs.* Sixty furlongs, or about seven or eight miles. It is not certain that these were apostles, but the contrary seems to be implied in ver. 33. See Note on that verse. If they were not, it is probable that they were in-

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother of* James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales,<sup>5</sup> and they believed them not.

12 Then<sup>6</sup> arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre ; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

13 ¶ And, behold, two<sup>7</sup> of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that

<sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 3. <sup>5</sup> Gen. xix. 14. <sup>6</sup> Kin. vii. 2. Job ix. 16. Psa. cxxvi. 1. Acts xii. 15. <sup>7</sup> John xx. 3, 6. <sup>8</sup> Mark xvi. 12.

timate disciples who may have been much with the Saviour during the latter part of his ministry, and the closing scenes of his life. But it is wholly unknown why they were going to Emmaus. It may have been that this was their native place, or that they had friends in the vicinity. They seem to have given up all for lost, and to have come to the conclusion that Jesus was not the Messiah, though they naturally conversed about it, and there were many things which they could not explain. Their Master had been crucified contrary to their expectation, their hopes dashed, their anticipation disappointed, and they were now returning in sadness, and very naturally conversed, in the way, of the things which had happened in Jerusalem !

15. *Communed together.* Talked together. ¶ *And reasoned.* They reasoned.

while they communed <sup>1</sup> *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden <sup>2</sup> that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 36. Mat. iii. 16. Matt. xviii. 20. <sup>2</sup> John xx. 14, 15; xxi. 4.

doubtless, about the probability or improbability that Jesus was the Messiah; about the evidence of his resurrection; and about what was to be done in the present state of things. ¶ *Jesus himself drew near*, &c. The disciples were properly employed. Their minds were anxious about the state of things, and they endeavoured to arrive at the truth. In this state of things Jesus came to solve their doubts, and establish them in the belief that he was the Christ. And we may learn from this, that Christ will guide those who are sincerely endeavouring to know the truth. They who candidly and seriously endeavour to ascertain what is true and right, he will guide; and often in an unexpected manner he will appear, to dissipate their doubts, and scatter all their perplexities. Our duty is sincerely to strive to ascertain the truth, and to do his will; and if his people do this, he will not leave them to perplexity and wandering.

16. *Their eyes were holden*. This expression is used merely to denote that they did not know who he was. It does not appear that they were the subjects of anything supernatural or miraculous; or that God used any power to blind them. Their not knowing Jesus may easily be accounted for without any such supposition, for, 1. He appeared in another form, Mark xvi. 12; i. e., in an appearance different from his usual appearance. 2. They were not expecting to see him, indeed they did not suppose that he was alive, and it required the strongest evidence to convince them that he was really risen from the dead.

17. *What manner of communications, &c.* What is the subject of your conversation? What is it that has so much

name was Cleopas,<sup>3</sup> answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a <sup>4</sup> prophet mighty <sup>5</sup> in deed and word before God and all the people:

<sup>3</sup> John xix. 25. <sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 16. John iii. 2. Acts ii. 22. <sup>5</sup> Acts vii. 22.

affected your minds? They were deeply affected in the recollection of the death of Jesus; and, as became all Christians, they were conversing about him, and were sad at the overwhelming events that had come upon them.

18. *Art thou only a stranger?* &c. This is an expression of surprise that he should be unacquainted with an affair that had made so much noise, and been attended with so remarkable circumstances. The word *stranger* here denotes one who had come to reside at a place only for a time, not a permanent inhabitant. Many Jews came up from all parts of the world to Jerusalem, to keep the passover there. They took Jesus to be such a stranger, or foreigner. The meaning of this verse may be thus expressed. The affair concerning which we are sad has been public, well-known, and has made a great talk and noise, so that all, even the strangers who have come up to remain there but a little time, are well acquainted with it. Art thou the only one of them who has not heard it? Is everybody so well acquainted with it, and thou hast not heard of it? It is a matter of surprise, and we cannot account for it.

19. *A prophet*. A teacher sent from God. They did not now call him the Messiah, for his death had led them to doubt that. But they had no doubt that he was a distinguished prophet. The evidence of that was so clear that they could not call it in question. ¶ *Mighty in deed*. Powerful in working miracles, in raising the dead, healing the sick, &c. ¶ *In word*. In teaching. ¶ *Before God and all the people*. Manifestly, publicly. So that God owned him, and the people regarded him as a distinguished teacher.

20 And <sup>1</sup> how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been <sup>2</sup> he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women <sup>3</sup> also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxiii. 1. Acts xiii. 27, 28. <sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 68. Acts i. 6. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 9, 10.

20. See chap. xxiii.

21. *We trusted.* We hoped, and expected. ¶ *Should have redeemed Israel.* That he was the Messiah, who would have delivered the nation from the Romans. ¶ *Besides all this.* It is to be observed that Cleopas, or Alphæus, states things just as they occurred to his own mind. There is little connexion. His mind is confused and distracted. There were so many things that were remarkable in Jesus; there was so much evidence that he was the Messiah; their hopes had been so suddenly dashed by his death, and the succeeding events had been so remarkable, that his mind was confused, and he knew not what to think. The things which he now stated served to increase his perplexity. The expressions here are perfectly natural. They bespeak an agitated mind. And they are among the simple touches of nature, which show that the book was not forged. If this had been an imposture, this artless and perplexed narrative would not have been thought of. ¶ *To-day is the third day,* &c. Jesus had foretold them that he would rise on the third day. This they did not understand; but it is not improbable that they looked to this day expecting something wonderful, and that the visit to the sepulchre had called it to their recollection; and they were more and more amazed when they put all these things together. As if they had said, the third day is come, and we have not seen him. Yet we begin to remember his promise, the angels have informed us

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain <sup>4</sup> of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them.<sup>5</sup> O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought <sup>6</sup> not Christ to have

<sup>4</sup> Ver. 12. <sup>5</sup> Heb. v. 11, 12. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 46. Acts xvii. 3. Heb. ix. 22, 23.

that he is alive, but we do not know how to put these things together, and what to make of them.

22, 23. *Certain women.* See Matt. xxviii. 1—7. John xx. 12. ¶ *A vision of angels.* An appearance of angels, or they had seen angels. See John xx. 12.

24. *Certain of them which were with us.* Peter and John. See John xx. 2—9.

25. *O fools.* The word *fool* sometimes is a term of reproach denoting wickedness. In this sense we are forbidden to employ it in addressing another. Matt. v. 22. That, however, is a different word in the Greek, from the word used in this verse. The one there used implies contempt, but that in this place denotes weakness or dulness. He reproached them for not seeing what he had himself so clearly predicted, and what had been foretold by the prophets. It does not in the original imply as much reproach as the word *fool* does among us. It was not an expression of contempt, it was an expression denoting merely that they were thoughtless, and that they did not properly attend to the evidence that he must die and rise again. ¶ *Slow of heart to believe.* Not quick to perceive. Dull at learning. They had suffered their previous opinions and prejudices to prevent their seeing the evidence that he must die, and rise from the dead. ¶ *All that the prophets have spoken.* Respecting the character and sufferings of the Messiah. See Note on ver. 27.

26. *Ought not Christ, &c.* Ought not

suffered these things, and to enter<sup>1</sup> into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses<sup>2</sup> and all the prophets,<sup>3</sup> he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. i. 3, 11. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 44. Acts iii. 22. <sup>3</sup> Acts x. 43; xxvi. 22.

the Messiah. Was there not evidence that he would die; and was it not indispensable that he should, in order to fulfil the prophecies? The necessity of his suffering these things referred to here was that it was foretold that he would. The reason why it was predicted, and why it was necessary that it should be, was that God was just; that it was proper that he should manifest his justice, and do honour to his law, and secure the due regard for his government while he pardoned the guilty.

27. *Beginning at Moses.* At the writings of Moses, or at the beginning of the Old Testament; or rather the word *beginning* should be separated from what follows, denoting simply that he commenced his discourse, and not that he began at the prophets as well as at Moses. Thus: and commencing his discourse, or replying to them, he expounded from Moses and the prophets, &c. ¶ *All the prophets.* The books of the Old Testament generally. ¶ *He expounded.* He explained or interpreted it to them. Probably he showed them that their notions of the Messiah were not according to the scriptures. They expected a temporal prince; they were confounded because Jesus had not assumed the regal power, but had been put to death. He showed them that according to the prophecies he ought to suffer, and that his death therefore was no argument that he was not the Messiah. ¶ *In all the scriptures.* In all the writings of the Old Testament. They were called scriptures, because they were written, the art of printing being then unknown. ¶ *The things concerning himself.* Concerning the Messiah. It does not appear that he applied them to himself, but left them probably to make the application. He showed what the scriptures foretold; and they saw that these things applied to Jesus of Naza-

<sup>4</sup> made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xxxii. 26. Mark vi. 48.

reth; and began to be satisfied that he was the Messiah. The most striking passages foretelling the character and sufferings of Christ, are the following, which we may suppose it possible our Saviour dwelt upon to convince them that though he was crucified, yet he was the Christ. Gen. iii. 15; xlix. 10. Num. xxi. 8, 9. Deut. xviii. 15. Compare Psa. xvi. xxiii. cx. Isa. ix. 6, 7; liii. Dan. ix. 25—27. Mal. iv. 2—6. John iii. 14.

28. *He made as though he would have gone further.* He did not say he would go further, but he kept on as if it was not his intention to stop; and doubtless he would have gone on, if they had not constrained him to tarry.

29. *Constrained him.* They urged him, or pressingly invited him. They did not yet perceive that it was Jesus, but they had been charmed and delighted with his discourses; and they wished to hear him further, and to show him kindness. Christians are delighted with communion with the Saviour. They seek it as the chief object of their desire, and they find their chief pleasure in fellowship with him. They felt it a privilege to entertain the preacher; and so those to whom the gospel is preached, and who love it, feel it a privilege, and not a burden, to make those comfortable who bear to them the message of salvation. ¶ *Abide with us.* Remain with us; or pass the night in our house.

30. *Sat at meat.* Reclined at the table; or while he was at supper. ¶ *He took bread, and blessed it, &c.* This was the office of a master of the feast; and perhaps this first attracted particularly their attention. Though he was in their house, yet he acted as master of the feast, as he used to do with them before his death. Perhaps also as he gave them the bread they observed the prints in his hands, and they knew that it was Jesus. This was



sat at meat with them, he<sup>1</sup> took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he<sup>2</sup> vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiv. 19. <sup>2</sup> Or. ceased to be seen of them. Ch. iv. 30. John viii. 59.

not a sacramental, but a common supper; yet our Saviour sought a blessing on the food, and thus set an example to all his followers to acknowledge God in his daily gifts, and to seek his benediction in all our enjoyments.

31. *Their eyes were opened.* The obscurity was removed. They saw him to be the Messiah. Their doubts were gone, and they saw clearly that he was risen, and was truly, as they had long hoped, the Saviour of men. It is not meant that they were before blind, but that they did not know till then who he was. ¶ *He vanished out of their sight.* He suddenly departed. It does not appear that there was any thing miraculous in this; but during their surprise, he took the opportunity suddenly to withdraw from them.

32. *Our heart burn within us.* This is an expression denoting the deep interest and pleasure they felt in his discourse, before they knew who he was. They now recalled his instruction; they remembered how his words reached the heart as he spoke to them; how convincingly he had shown them that the Messiah ought to suffer, and how, while he talked to them of the Christ that they so much loved, their hearts glowed with intense love. This was not true of them alone. All the followers of Jesus know how precious and tender are the communications of the Saviour, and how the heart glows with intense love as they think or hear of his life, and sufferings, and death. ¶ *He opened to us.* He explained to us the scriptures. See ver. 27.

This narrative shows us, 1. How blind men may be to the plainest doctrines of the scriptures, until they are explained to them. These disciples had often read or heard the scriptures, but never till then did they know that the Messiah must suffer. 2. It is proper to have persons to explain the scriptures. Jesus did it while

Did not our heart burn<sup>3</sup> within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered to-

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxix. 3; civ. 34. Prov. xxvii. 9, 17. Jer. xx. 9; xliii. 22.

on earth; he does it now by his Spirit, and he has appointed his ministers, whose business it is to explain them. 3. If men attempt to explain the bible, they should themselves understand it. They should give their time and talents to a suitable preparation to explain the sacred volume. Preaching should consist in real, and not fancied explanations of the scriptures; the real doctrines which God has taught in his word, and not the doctrines that men have taught in their systems. 4. Here was convincing evidence that Jesus was the Messiah. This was but one of many instances where Jesus convinced his disciples contrary to their previous belief. In this case the evidence was abundant. He first satisfied them from the Old Testament that the very things which had happened were foretold: he then dissipated every doubt, by showing himself to them, and convincing them that he was truly the Christ. There was no chance here for deception and juggling. Who would have met them, and talked with them, in this way but the real Saviour. Who would have thought of writing this narrative to help an imposture? What impostor would have recorded the dulness of the disciples as to the plain declarations of the Old Testament, and then have thought of this device to prop up the narrative! Every thing about this narrative, its simplicity, its tenderness, its particularity, its perfect nature, and its freedom from all appearance of trick, shows that it was taken from real life; and if so, then the Christian religion is true, for here is evidence that Jesus rose from the dead.

33. *The same hour.* Though it was late, and they had stopped as they thought for the night, yet such was their joy, that they hastened to tell it to their companions and friends. It was natural and proper; and it shows how quick and

gether, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath <sup>1</sup> appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

36 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 5.    <sup>2</sup> Mark xvi. 14—18. John xx. 19—23.

ready they who have found the Saviour are to tell it to others. Young converts to Christ should hasten to tell their joy, and should not shrink at self-denial to proclaim to others what God hath done for their souls. Psa. lxi. 16.

"My lips and cheerful heart prepare  
To make his mercies known;  
Come ye that fear my God, and hear  
The wonders he hath done.

"When on my head huge sorrows fell,  
I sought his heavenly aid,  
He saved my sinking soul from hell,  
And death's eternal shade."

¶ *The eleven.* The eleven apostles. Judas was now dead. This shows that the two that went to Emmaus were not apostles.

34. *Saying.* The eleven said this. ¶ *Hath appeared to Simon.* To Peter. It is not known precisely when this happened, as the time and place are not mentioned. Paul has referred to it in 1 Cor. xv. 5; from which it appears that he appeared to Cephas, or Peter, before he did to any other of the apostles. This was a mark of special love and favour, and particularly after Peter's denial, it showed how ready he was to pardon, and how willing to impart comfort to those who are penitent, though their sins are great.

36, 37. *Jesus stood in the midst of them.* This was when the apostles were assembled, and when they had closed the doors for fear of the Jews. John xx. 19. It was this fact, as well as his sudden and unexpected appearance, that alarmed them. The doors were shut, and the suddenness of his appearance led them to

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed <sup>3</sup> that they had seen a spirit.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 30.    1 Sam. xxviii. 13.    Job iv. 14—16. Mark vi. 49. Acts xii. 15.

suppose they had seen a spirit. ¶ *Peace be unto you.* This was a form of salutation among the Hebrews, denoting a wish of peace and prosperity. See Gen. xliii. 23. It was peculiarly appropriate for Jesus, as he had said before his death that he left his peace with them as their inheritance, John xiv. 27, and as they were now alarmed, and fearful at their state, and trembling for fear of the Jews. John xx. 19.

38. *Why are ye troubled?* Why are you alarmed, or frightened? ¶ *And why do thoughts, &c.* The word *thoughts* here means doubts, or suspicions. It is used in this sense also in 1 Tim. ii. 8. The doubts which they had were whether he was the Christ. He reproves them for doubting this, for: 1. The scriptures had foretold his death. 2. He had himself repeatedly foretold it. And, 3. They had now the testimony of Peter, that he had seen Jesus alive, and of the angels, that he was risen. After all this evidence, Jesus reproves them for doubting whether he was truly the Messiah.

39—43. *Behold my hands, &c.* Jesus proceeds to give them evidence that he was truly the same person that had been crucified. He first showed them his hands and his feet, still pierced, and with the wounds made by the nails, still open. Compare John xx. 27. He told them to handle him, and see him. He ate before them. All this was to satisfy them that he was not, as they supposed, a spirit. Nor could better evidence be given. He appealed to their senses, and performed

41 And while they yet believed<sup>1</sup> not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have<sup>2</sup> ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

43 And he took it, and did eat<sup>3</sup> before them.

44 And he said unto them, These

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xlv. 26. <sup>2</sup> John xxi. 5, 6. <sup>3</sup> Acts x. 41.

acts which a disembodied spirit could not do. ¶ *Handle me.* Or, touch me, feel me. Compare John xx. 27. ¶ *And sec.* Be convinced, for you could not thus handle a spirit. The object here was to convince them that his body had really come to life. ¶ *For a spirit, &c.* He appeals here to what they well knew. And this implies that a spirit may exist separate from the body. That was the view of the apostles, and our Saviour distinctly countenances that belief.

41. *Believed not for joy.* Their joy was so great, and his appearance was so sudden and unexpected, that they were bewildered, and still sought more evidence of the truth of what they wished to believe. This is a specimen of perfect nature. We have similar expressions in our language. The news is too good to be true; or, I cannot believe it; it is too much for me. ¶ *Any meat.* This word does not mean meat in our sense of it, but in the old English sense denoting any thing to eat.

42. *Honeycomb.* Honey abounded in Palestine, and was a very common article of food. Bees lived in caves of the rocks, and in the hollows of trees, and were also kept as with us. The disciples gave probably just what was their own common fare, and what was ready at the time.

44. *These are the words.* Or this is the fulfilment of what I before told you respecting my death. See chap. xviii. 33. Mark x. 33, 34. ¶ *While I was yet with you.* Before my death. While I was with you as a teacher and guide. ¶ *In the law of Moses.* The five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Among the Jews this was the first division of the Old Testament, and was called the law. ¶ *The prophets.* This was the second and largest

\* *are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all<sup>2</sup> things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the<sup>6</sup> prophets, and in the psalms,<sup>7</sup> concerning me.*

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xvi. 21. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xxi. 32. Acts iii. 19; xiii. 27, 33. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 27. <sup>7</sup> Psa. xxii. cx.

part of the Hebrew scriptures. It comprehended the books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, which were called the former prophets; and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the twelve smaller books from Daniel to Malachi, which were called the latter prophets. ¶ *The Psalms.* This word here probably means what were comprehended under the name of *Hagiographa*, or holy writings. It comprehended the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Songs of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and the two books of Chronicles. This division of the Old Testament was in use long before the time of Christ, and was what he referred to here. And he meant to say that in each of these divisions of the Old Testament there were prophecies respecting himself. The particular subject before them was his resurrection from the dead. A most striking prediction of this is contained in Psa. xvi. 9—11. Compare it with Acts ii. 34—32; xiii. 35—37.

45. *Opened he their understanding.* Enabled them to comprehend the meaning of the prophecies that foretold his death and resurrection. They had seen him die; they now saw him risen. Their prejudices, by his instructions, and by the facts which they could no longer call in question, were removed, and they no longer doubted that he was the Messiah, and that all the facts in the case which had before confounded them, could be easily accounted for. Here we may learn, 1. That facts or truths will yet remove the mysteries that we now see in religion. 2. That our prejudices and our preconceived opinions, are one cause of our seeing so many mysteries in the Bible. If a man is willing to take the plain declarations of the Bible, he will be little

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ<sup>1</sup> to suffer, and to rise<sup>2</sup> from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and<sup>3</sup> remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses<sup>4</sup> of these things.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liiii. 3, 5. Acts iv. 12. <sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. i. 3. Acts v. 31; xiii. 28. <sup>3</sup> Acts i. 8.

perplexed with mysteries. 3. That God only can open the mind so as fully to comprehend the scriptures. He only can overcome our prejudices, open our hearts, and dispose us to receive the engrafted word with meekness, and with the simplicity of a child. See Mark x. 15. Acts vi. 14. Jas. i. 21. 4. The design of God's opening the understanding is that we may be acquainted with the scriptures. It is not that we may be made wise above what is written, but that we may submit ourselves wholly to the word of God.

46. *It behoved.* It became; it was proper or necessary that the Messiah should thus suffer. It was predicted of him, and all things have happened as it was foretold.

47. *Repentance.* Sorrow for sin, and forsaking of it. It was proper that the necessity of repentance should be preached among all nations, for all were sinners. See Acts xvii. 30. *Remission of sins.* Pardon or forgiveness of sins. It should be proclaimed that all men should repent, and that those who are penitent may now be pardoned. ¶ *In my name.* By my command it should be proclaimed that men should repent, and by my merit they may be pardoned. Pardon is offered by the authority of Christ to all nations, and his is a sufficient warrant to offer the gospel to every man. ¶ *Beginning at Jerusalem.* This was the dwelling-place of his murderers, and it shows his readiness to forgive the vilest sinners. It was the holy place of the temple, the habitation of God, the place of the solemnities of the ancient dispensation to which the Messiah came, and it was proper that pardon should be first proclaimed there. This was done. The gospel was first preached there. See

49 ¶ And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power<sup>5</sup> from on high.

50 ¶ And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted

<sup>5</sup> Isa. xlv. 3. Joel ii. 28—32. Acts ii. 1—21.

Acts ii. Paul also, in his travels, preached the gospel first to the Jews, the ancient people of God, offering them pardon through their own Messiah; and when they rejected it, he turned to the Gentiles. Acts xiii. 46.

48. *Are witnesses of these things.* Of my life, my sufferings, my death, and my resurrection. How solemn was their office, to testify these things to the world, and in the face of sufferings and death to go and proclaim it to all nations! In like manner, all Christians are witnesses for Christ; they are the evidences of his mercy and his love; and they should live so that others might also be brought to see and love the Saviour.

49. *The promise of my Father.* The promise which the Father had made to them through the Saviour. See Matt. x. 19. John xiv. 16, 17, 26. The promise was, that they should be aided by the power of the Holy Ghost. He also doubtless referred to the promise of God made in the days of Joel, respecting the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. See Joel ii. 28, 29, compared with Acts ii. 16—21. ¶ *Endued with power from on high.* The power which would be given them by the descent of the Holy Ghost. The power of speaking with tongues, of working miracles, and of preaching the gospel with the attending blessing and aid of the Holy Ghost. This was accomplished in the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. See Acts ii.

50, 51. *To Bethany.* See the Note on Mark xvi. 19. Bethany was on the eastern declivity of the mount of Olives, from which our Lord was taken up to heaven. Acts i. 12. Bethany was a favoured place. It was the abode of Martha, and

from them, and carried <sup>1</sup> up into heaven.

52 And <sup>2</sup> they worshipped him,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. ii. 11. John xx. 17. Acts i. 9. Eph. iv. 8—10. Heb. iv. 14. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxviii. 9, 17. John xx. 28.

Mary, and Lazarus, and our Saviour delighted to be there. From this place also he ascended to his Father and our Father, and to his God and our God. ¶ *While he blessed them.* While he commanded his benediction to rest upon them; while he assured them of his favour, and commended them to the protection and guidance of God, in the dangers, trials, and conflicts which they were to meet in a sinful and miserable world.

52. *They worshipped him.* The word *worship* does not always denote religious homage. But here it is to be remarked, 1. That they offered this worship to an absent Saviour. It was after he left them, and had vanished out of their sight. It was, therefore, an act of religion, and was the first religious homage that was paid to Jesus after he had left the world. 2. If they worshipped an absent Saviour, a

and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

53 And were continually in the temple, praising<sup>3</sup> and blessing God. Amen.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ii. 46, 47; v. 43.

Saviour unseen by the bodily eye, it is right for us to do it. It was an example which we may and should follow. 3. If worship may be rendered to Jesus, he is divine. See Exod. xx. 4, 5.

53. *Were continually in the temple.* Until the day of Pentecost: that is, about ten days after. See Acts ii. ¶ *Praising and blessing God.* Chiefly for the full proof that the Messiah had come, had redeemed them, and had ascended to heaven. Thus the days of their mourning were ended. They were filled with happiness at the assurance of redemption, and expressed what every Christian should feel, fulness of joy at the glad tidings that a Saviour has died, and risen, and ascended to God; and an earnest desire to pour forth, in the sanctuary, prayers and thankgivings to the God of grace for his mercy to a lost and ruined world.

# P R E F A C E

TO THE

## GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

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JOHN, the writer of this gospel, was the son of Zebedee and Salome. Compare Matt. xxvii. 56, with Mark xv. 40, 41. His father was a fisherman of Galilee, though it would appear that he was not destitute of property, and was not in the lowest condition of life. He had hired men in his employ. Mark i. 20. Salome is described as one who attended our Saviour in his travels, and ministered to his wants. Matt. xxvii. 55. Mark xv. 41. Jesus commended his own mother Mary, on the cross, to John, who took her to his home, John xix. 16, where, history informs us, she lived unto her death, about fifteen years after the crucifixion of Christ. John was known to Caiaphas the high priest. John xviii. 15. From all this it would seem not improbable that John had some property, and was better known than any of the other apostles.

He was the youngest of the apostles when he was called, and he lived to the greatest age. He is the only one who is supposed to have died a peaceful death. He was called to be a follower of Jesus while engaged with his father and his eldest brother James, mending their nets at the sea of Tiberias. Matt. iv. 21. Mark i. 19. Luke v. 10.

John was admitted by our Saviour to peculiar favour and friendship. One of the ancient fathers, Theophylact, says that he was related to the Saviour. "Joseph," he says, "had seven children by a former wife, four sons and three daughters, Martha, Esther, and Salome, whose son John was; therefore Salome was reckoned our Lord's sister, and John was his nephew." If this was the case, it may explain the reason why James and John sought and expected the first places in his kingdom. Matt. xx. 20, 21. These may also possibly be the persons who were called our Lord's brethren and sisters. Matt. xiii. 55, 56. And it may also explain the reason why our Saviour committed his mother to the care of John, on the cross. John xix. 27.

The two brothers, James and John, with Peter, were several times admitted to peculiar favours by our Lord. They were the only disciples that were permitted to be present at the raising of the daughter of

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Jairus, Mark v. 37; Luke viii. 51; they attended the Saviour to the mount where he was transfigured, Matt. xvii. 1. Mark ix. 2. The same three were permitted to be present at his sufferings in the garden of Gethsemane. Matt. xxvi. 36—45. Mark xiv. 32—42. And it was to these disciples, together with Andrew, to whom Jesus especially addressed himself when he made known the desolations that were coming upon Jerusalem and Judea. Compare Matt. xxiv. 12; Mark xiii. 3, 4. John was also admitted to peculiar friendship with the Lord Jesus. Hence he is mentioned as "that disciple whom Jesus loved," John xix. 26; and he is represented, John xiii. 23, as leaning on Jesus' bosom at the institution of the Lord's supper, an evidence of peculiar friendship. See Note on that place. Though the Redeemer was attached to all his disciples, yet there is no absurdity in supposing that his disposition was congenial with that of the meek and amiable John; thus he authorized and set the example of special friendships among Christians.

After the ascension of Christ, John remained some time at Jerusalem. Acts i. 14; iii. 1; iv. 13. John is also mentioned as having been sent down to Samaria to preach the gospel there with Peter, Acts viii. 5—25, and from Acts xv. it appears that he was present at the council at Jerusalem, A. D. 49 or 50. All this agrees with what is said by Eusebius, that he lived at Jerusalem till the death of Mary, fifteen years after the crucifixion of Christ. Till this time it is probable that he was not engaged in preaching the gospel among the Gentiles.

At what time John went first among the Gentiles to preach the gospel is not certainly known. It has commonly been supposed that he resided in Judea and the neighbourhood until the war broke out with the Romans, and that he came into Asia Minor about the year 66 or 70. It is clear that he was not at Ephesus at the time that Paul visited those regions, as in all the travels of Paul and Luke there is no mention ever made of John.

Ecclesiastical history informs us that this apostle spent the latter part of his life in Asia Minor, and that he resided principally in Ephesus, the chief city of that country. Of his residence there little is known. In the latter part of his life he was banished to Patmos, a small desolate island in the Ægean Sea, about twenty miles in circumference. This is commonly supposed to have been during the persecution of Domitian, and in the latter part of that emperor's reign. Domitian died A. D. 96. It is probable that John returned soon after that, in the reign of the emperor Trajan. In Patmos he wrote the book of Revelation. Rev. i. 9. After his return, he lived peaceably at Ephesus until his death, which is supposed to have occurred not long after. He was buried at Ephesus. We know not what his age was when Christ called him to follow him; but we cannot suppose it was less than twenty-five or thirty, and if so, he must have been not far from one hundred years old when he died.

Many anecdotes are related of him while he remained at Ephesus,

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ut there is no sufficient evidence of their truth. Some have said that he was taken to Rome in a time of persecution, and thrown into a caldron of boiling oil, and came out uninjured. It has been said that going into a bath one day at Ephesus, he perceived Cerinthus, who denied the divinity of the Saviour, and that John fled from him hastily, to express his disapprobation of his doctrine. It is also said, and of this there can be no doubt, that during his latter years he was not able to make a long discourse. He was carried to the church, and was accustomed to say nothing but this: "Little children, love one another." At length his disciples asked him why he always dwelt upon the same thing. He replied, "Because it is the Lord's command; and if this be done, it is sufficient."

Learned men have been much divided about the time when this gospel was written. Wetstein supposed it was written just after our Saviour's ascension; Mill and Le Clerc, that it was written in 97; Dr. Lardner, that it was about the year 68, just before the destruction of Jerusalem. The common opinion is, that it was written at Ephesus, after the apostle's return from Patmos, and of course as late as the year 97 or 98. Nothing can be determined with certainty on the subject, and it is a matter of very little consequence,

There is no doubt that it was written by John. This is abundantly confirmed by the ancient fathers, and was not questioned by Celsus, Porphyry, or Julian, the acutest enemies of revelation in the early ages. The authorship of this book has never been extensively questioned; and it is one of the books of the New Testament whose canonical authority was never disputed. See Lardner, and Paley's Evidences.

The design of writing it, John himself states. Ch. xx. 31. It was to show that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that those who believed might have life through his name. This design is kept in view through the whole gospel, and should be remembered in our attempts to explain it. Various attempts have been made to show that this gospel was written to confute the followers of Cerinthus and the Gnostics, but no satisfactory evidence of such a design has been furnished.

As John wrote after the other evangelists, he has recorded many things which they omitted. He dwells much more fully than they do on the divine character of Jesus, relates many things pertaining to the early part of his ministry which they had omitted, records many more of his discourses than they have done, and particularly the interesting discourse at the institution of the supper. See ch. xiv.—xvii.

It has been remarked that there are evidences in this Gospel that it was not written for the Jews. He explains words and customs which to a Jew would have needed no explanation. See ch. i. 38, 41; v. 9; v. 1, 2; vii. 2. The style in the Greek indicates that the writer was an unlearned man. It is simple, plain, unpolished; such as we should suppose would be used by one in John's circumstances. At the same time it is dignified, containing pure and profound sentiments.



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and it is on many accounts the most difficult of all the books of the New Testament to interpret. It contains more about Christ, his person, design, and work, than any of the other gospels. The other evangelists were employed more in recording the miracles, and giving external evidence of the divine mission of Jesus. John is employed chiefly in telling us what Christ was, and what was his peculiar doctrine. His aim was to show, 1. That Jesus was the Messiah. 2. To show, from the words of Jesus himself, what the Messiah was. The other evangelists record the parables of Christ, his miracles, his debates with the scribes and Pharisees; John records chiefly his discourses about himself. If any one wishes to learn the true doctrine respecting the Messiah, the Son of God, expressed in simple language, but with most sublime conceptions; to learn the true nature and character of God, and the way of approach to his mercy-seat; to see the true nature of christian piety, or the source and character of religious consolation; to have perpetually before him the purest model of character the world has seen, and to contemplate the purest precepts that have ever been delivered to man; he cannot better do it than by a prayerful study of the Gospel by John. It may be added, that this Gospel is, of itself, proof that cannot be overthrown of the truth of revelation. John was a fisherman, unhonoured and unlearned. Acts iv. 13. What man in that rank of life now could compose a book like this? And can it be conceived that any man of that rank, unless under the influence of inspiration, could conceive so sublime notions of God, so pure views of morals, and draw a character so inimitably lovely and pure as that of Jesus Christ? To ask these questions is to answer them. And this gospel will stand to the end of time as an unanswerable demonstration that the fisherman who wrote it was under a more than human guidance, and was, according to the promise that he has recorded (ch. xvi. 13, comp. ch. xiv. 26), guided into all truth. It will also remain as an unanswerable proof that the character which he has described, the character of the Lord Jesus, was real. It is a perfect character. It has not a flaw. How has this happened? The attempt has often been made to draw a perfect character, and as often, in every other instance, failed. How is it, when Homer, and Virgil, and the ancient historians have all failed to describe a perfect character, with the purest models before them, and with all the aid of imagination. that in every instance they have failed? How is it that this has at last been accomplished only by a Jewish fisherman? The difficulty is vastly increased if another idea is borne in mind. John describes one who he believed had a divine nature. Ch. i. 1. It is an attempt to describe God in human nature, or to show how the divine being acts when united with man, or when appearing in human form. And the description is complete. There is not a word expressed by the Lord Jesus, or an emotion ascribed to him, inconsistent with such a supposition. But this same attempt was often made, and as often failed.

PREFACE TO JOHN.

er and Virgil and all the ancient poets have undertaken to show the gods would be if they came down and conversed with man. what were they? What were Jupiter, and Juno, and Venus, and , and Vulcan? Beings of lust, and envy, and contention, and l. How has it happened that the only successful account which een given of the divine nature united with the human, and living acting as became such a union, has been given by a jewish fisher- ? How, unless the character was real, and the writer under a nce far superior to the genius of Homer, and the imagination of il—the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

## CHARACTERISTICS OF JOHN'S GOSPEL.

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THE ancients, it has been said, regarded the gospel of John as of pre-eminent value, denominating it the "spiritual gospel," and, "the heart of Christ." They regarded it thus, on account of its consisting so largely of the discourses of the Saviour; some delivered to the Jews generally; some to his most bitter adversaries among the Jews, and some, and those not the least precious parts of the book, to his intimate friends and followers. The most cursory reader will easily distinguish these several discourses.

It has been thought that in writing his gospel, John had a special reference to the errors of certain theosophists, comprising professed Christians as well as heathens, and usually known as Gnostics; a widespread sect who, during the decline and fall of the Greek philosophy, mingled its dogmas, together with parts of other philosophic systems, with oriental mysticism; constructing a system by this means, partly philosophical, partly religious, stranger and sadder than the world had ever seen. A full account of this system may be seen in Dr. Edward Burton's Bampton Lectures, 1829; and in Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia, under the word *Gnosticism*. This supposed reference of John has, however, been doubted: "Why," it has been asked, "need we suppose the evangelist writes with any other design than that which the pre-eminent importance of the doctrines respecting Christ's person readily supplies? If the views which he expounds be regarded as essential to Christianity, what is the propriety of supposing that they must be forced upon our attention by antagonistic influence? John himself gives a very different reason for the compilation of his own work." Ch. xx. 31.

This gospel may perhaps be regarded as supplementary to the accounts given by the other evangelists. Such is the opinion of many of the soundest critics. Internal evidence of this character of the gospel is not wanting. John pre-supposes an acquaintance with the history of the Redeemer. Compare ch. i. 32, 33, with Matt. iii. 16, 17; Mark i. 10, 11; Luke iii. 22. Ch. i. 45, with Matt. ii. 23; Luke ii. 4. Ch. xv. 20, with Matt. x. 24; Luke vi. 40. With the exception of the account of the passion and of the resurrection of

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Christ, there are only two sections in which John coincides with other gospels, ch. vi. 1—21, and ch. xii. 1. He omits the baptism of Jesus, the history of his temptation and transfiguration, the institution of the supper, and the internal conflict at Gethsemane; all proving that he intended to confine himself to such communications as were wanting in the other evangelical narratives.

Among the peculiarities of this gospel, the inculcation of the four following doctrines rank as the chief.

I. The mystical relation of the Son to the Father.

II. The mystical relation between the Redeemer and believers.

III. The character and office of the Holy Ghost or Comforter whom Christ would send that he might abide ever with his servants, "to guide them into all truth." And,

IV. The peculiar importance ascribed to love.

It is not intended to intimate that these subjects are left untouched by other evangelists and writers in the New Testament. Matthew adverts to the first of these four topics, ch. xi. 27; and to the second, ch. xxviii. 20. Luke speaks of the effusion of the Holy Spirit to perfect the disciples for their work, ch. xxiv. 49. Paul's doctrine as to love, 1 Cor. xiii. resembles that which John reports as taught by the Saviour. Nevertheless, these particular topics are so largely and distinctly exhibited by John as to give a special character to his gospel.

John writes, not a mere collection of *memorabilia* without definite design. His paragraphs and sentences are the gushings forth of truth and love, diffusing holy light and warm affection through the reader's heart. He evidently designs to represent Christ as the Son of God, in whom deity and humanity are combined, in order to the salvation of sinners. With this purpose in view, he selects those discourses of Jesus in which the Saviour spoke of his person and work. John's references to the miracles of Christ are made with the same object in view. In the healing of the blind, Jesus appears as the light of the world. In the feeding of the multitude by miracle, Jesus showed that he was the heavenly manna. The turning of water into wine is a symbol of the ennobling of the church through Christ. The resurrection of Lazarus made manifest that Christ is the life of men. John does not notice the institution of the sacraments, since this was a matter well known, but he explains their nature and design. The last discourse and death of the Saviour are given at great length, because this was of the utmost importance in the successful prosecution of the evangelist's plan.

"One of the peculiarities of John," says a learned writer in Dr. Kitto's Cyclopædia, "is, that in speaking of the adversaries of Jesus, he always calls them *oi Ioudaioi*. This observation has, in modern times, given rise to a peculiar opinion concerning the plan of John's gospel; namely, that the evangelist has from the very beginning of the gospel the following theme before his eyes: The eternal combat

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between divine light and the corruption of mankind, exemplified by the mutual opposition subsisting between the hostile jewish party and the manifestation of the Son of God, which combat terminates in the victory of light." Whether this opinion be well founded or otherwise, we cannot determine; the parallelism as to both Christ's conflict and its issue is suggestive, and will augment the delight and benefit with which this gospel repays every careful and devout perusal. It has been described as a calm, deep sea. Calm, indeed, with the peace of heaven; deep, indeed, with the depth of Godlike love. The divine Saviour is followed from the bosom of his Father; he is seen in his wondrous works, in his touching sympathy, in his loving discourses; he is beheld on the cross, blessing while he groans, and saving while he dies. Entwined in all are the innocent sensibilities of human nature with the sublime, unfathomable, and harmonious perfections of the Godhead. Tears and prayers, love and adoration, may well be called forth by the several parts of this divinely-inspired account of the conflict and triumph of the great Captain of our salvation, who, made perfect by sufferings, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, expecting thenceforth till all his enemies be made his footstool.

S. G.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

## CHAPTER I.

*The deity of Jesus Christ, 1—5. John's mission, 6—8. Christ's coming into the world, 9—18. John's testimony to Christ, 19—37. Andrew, Peter, Philip*

1. *In the beginning.* This expression is used also in Gen. i. 1. To that place John evidently has allusion here, and means to apply to *the Word*, an expression which is there applied to God. In both places it clearly means before creation, before the world was made, when as yet there was nothing. The meaning is, that *the Word* had an existence before the world was created. This is not spoken of the man Jesus, but of that which became a man, or was incarnate. Ver. 14. The Hebrews, by expressions like this, commonly denoted eternity. Thus the eternity of God is described, Psal. xc. 2, "Before the mountains were brought forth," &c. And eternity is commonly expressed by the phrase, "before the foundation of the world." Whatever is meant by the term *Word*, it is clear that it had an existence before creation. It is not, then, a creature, or created being, and must be, therefore, uncreated and eternal. There is but one Being that is uncreated, and Jesus must be therefore divine. Compare the Saviour's own declarations respecting himself in the following places: ch. iii. 13; vi. 46, 62; viii. 14, 58; xvi. 28; xvii. 5. ¶ *Was the word.* Greek, *was the Logos*. This name is given to him who afterwards became flesh, or incarnate, ver. 14; i. e., to the Messiah. Whatever is meant by it, therefore, is applicable to the Lord Jesus Christ. There have been many opinions about the reason why this name was given to the Son of God, and about its meaning. Those opinions it is unnecessary to repeat. The opinion which seems most plausible may be expressed as follows: A word is that by which we communicate our will, by which we convey our thoughts, or by which we issue commands; the medium of communication with others. 2. The Son of

*and Nathanael inquire about Christ, 38—51.*

IN <sup>1</sup> the beginning was the Word, <sup>2</sup> and the Word was

<sup>1</sup> Prov. viii. 22—31. Col. i. 16, 17. 1 John i. 1. <sup>2</sup> Rev. xix. 13.

God may be called *the Word*, because he is the medium by which God promulgates his will, and issues his commandment. See Heb. i. 1—3. 3. This term was in use before the time of John. *a.* It was used in the Chaldee translation of the Old Testament; as e. g., Isa. xlv. 12: "I have made the earth, and created man upon it." In the Chaldee it is, "I, *by my word*, have made," Isa. xlviii. 13: "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth." In the Chaldee, "*By my word* I have founded the earth." And so in many other places. *b.* This term was used by the Jews as applicable to the Messiah. In their writings he was commonly known by the term "*Memra*," i. e., Word; and no small part of the interpositions of God in defence of the Jewish nation were declared to be by "*the Word of God*." Thus, in their Targum, on Deut. xxvi. 17, 18, it is said, "Ye have appointed *THE WORD OF GOD* a king over you this day, that he may be your God." *c.* This term was used by the Jews who were scattered among the Gentiles, and especially those who were conversant with the Greek philosophy. *d.* The term was used by the followers of Plato among the Greeks, to denote the second person of the Trinity. The term *nous* or mind, was commonly given to this second person; but it was said that this *nous* was the word, or reason of the first person. The term was therefore extensively in use among the Jews and Gentiles before John wrote his gospel; and it was certain that it would be applied to the second person of the Trinity by Christians, whether converted from Judaism or Paganism. It was important, therefore, that the meaning of the term should be settled by an inspired man; and accordingly John, in the commencement of his gospel, is at much pains

with <sup>1</sup> God, and the Word was <sup>2</sup> God.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 5.    <sup>2</sup> Phil. ii. 6.    Heb. i. 8—13.  
1 John v. 7.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 58.    Prov. viii. 22—31.

to state clearly what is the true doctrine respecting the Logos, or Word. It is possible also that the doctrines of the Gnostics had begun to spread in the time of John. The Gnostics were an oriental sect, who held that the Logos or Word was one of the Aeons that had been created, and that this one had been united to the man Jesus. If that doctrine had begun to prevail, it was of the more importance for John to settle the truth in regard to the rank of the Logos or Word. This he has done, so that there need be no doubt about his meaning. ¶ *Was with God.* This expression denotes friendship, intimacy. Compare Mark ix. 19. John affirms that he was with God *in the beginning*; i. e., before the world was made. It implies, therefore, that he was partaker of the divine glory; that he was blessed and happy with God. It proves that he was intimately united with the Father, so as to partake of his glory and to be appropriately called by the name of God. He has himself explained it. See ch. xvii. 5. See also ch. i. 18. See also ch. iii. 13. Compare Phil. ii. 6, 7. ¶ *Was God.* In the previous phrase John had said that the Word was with God. Lest it should be supposed that he was a different and inferior being, he here states that he was God. There is no more unequivocal declaration in the Bible than this, and there could be no stronger proof that the sacred writer meant to affirm that the Son of God was equal with the Father. For, 1. There is no doubt that by the Logos is meant Jesus Christ. 2. This is not an attribute or quality of God, but is a real subsistence, for it is said that the Logos was made flesh; that is, became a man. 3. There is no variation here in the manuscripts, and critics have observed that the Greek will bear no other construction than what is expressed in our translation, that the Word was God. 4. There is no evidence that John intended to use the word God in an inferior sense. It is not *the Word was a God*, or *the Word was like God*, but *the Word was God*. The apostle had just used the word God as evidently applying to Jehovah,

the true God; and it is absurd to suppose that he would in the same verse, and without any indication that he was using the word in an inferior sense, employ it to denote a being altogether inferior to the true God. The name God is elsewhere given to him, showing that he is the supreme God. See ch. xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. Heb. i. 8—12. 1 John v. 20. The meaning of this important verse may, then, be thus summed up: 1. The name Logos, or Word, is given to Christ in reference to his becoming the teacher or instructor of mankind; the medium of communication between God and man. 2. The name was in use at the time of John, and it was his design to state the correct doctrine respecting the Logos. 3. The Word or Logos existed before creation; of course was not a creature, and must have been, therefore, from eternity. 4. He was *with God*, i. e. was united to him in a most intimate and close union before the creation; and as it could not be said that God was with himself, it follows that the Logos was in some sense distinct from God, or that there was a distinction between the Father and the Son. When we say that one is with another, we imply that there is some sort of distinction between them. 5. Yet, lest it should be supposed he was a different and inferior being, a creature, it is affirmed that he was God, i. e., equal with the Father. This is the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity: 1. That the second person is in some sense distinct from the first. 2. That he is intimately united with him in essence, so that there are not two or more Gods. 3. That the second may be called by the same name, has the same attributes, performs the same works, and is entitled to the same honours with the first; and that therefore he is the same in substance, and equal in power and glory, with God.

2. *The same.* The Word, or the Logos. ¶ *Was in the beginning with God.* This seems to be a repetition of what was said in the first verse. But it is repeated to guard the doctrine, and to prevent the possibility of a mistake. It had been said that he was before creation, and that

3 All<sup>1</sup> things were made by him;<sup>2</sup> and without him was not

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxviii. 6. Eph. iiii. 9. <sup>2</sup> Isa. xlv. 12, 18. Col. i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 2, 3, 10—12. 1 John v. 20.

he was with God. But he had not said in the first verse that the union with God existed in the beginning. He now expresses that idea, and assures us that that union was not one that was commenced in time, and which might be, therefore, a mere union of feeling, or a compact, like that between any other beings, but was one which existed in eternity, and which was, therefore, a union of nature or essence.

3. *All things.* The universe. The expression cannot be limited to any part of the universe. It appropriately expresses every thing which exists; all the vast masses of material worlds; and all the animals, and things, great or small, that compose those worlds. See Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 2. Rev. iv. 11. ¶ *Were made.* The original word is from the verb *to be*, and signifies *were by him*. But it expresses the idea of creation here. It does not alter the sense, whether it is said, *were by him*, or, *were created by him*. The word is often used in the sense of *creating*, or *forming from nothing*. See Gen. ii. 4, Isa. xlviii. 7, in the Septuagint, and Jas. iii. 9. ¶ *By him.* In this place it is affirmed that creation was effected by the Word, or the Son of God. In Gen. i. 1, it is said that the being who created the heavens and the earth was God. In Psa. cii. 25—28, this work is ascribed to Jehovah. The Word, or the Son of God, is, therefore, appropriately called God. The work of creation is most commonly ascribed in the scriptures to the second person of the Trinity. See Col. i. 16. Heb. i. 2, 10. By this is meant evidently that he was the agent, or the efficient cause, by which the universe was made. There is no higher proof of omnipotence than the work of creation; and hence God often appeals to that work to prove that he is the true God in opposition to idols. See Psa. xxiv. 2; lxxxix. 11. Prov. iii. 19. Isa. xl. 18—28. Jer. x. 3—16. It is absurd to say that God can invest a creature with omnipotence. If he can make a creature omnipotent, he can make him omniscient, and can, in the same way, make him omnipresent,

any thing made that was made.

4 In him<sup>3</sup> was life; and the life was the light<sup>4</sup> of men.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 26. 1 John v. 11. <sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 12.

and infinitely wise and good; that is, he can invest a creature with all his own attributes, or make another being like himself, or which is the same thing, there could be two Gods, or as many Gods as he should choose to make. But this is absurd. The being, therefore, that created all things must be divine; and as this work is ascribed to Jesus Christ, and as it is uniformly in the scriptures declared to be the work of God, Jesus Christ is, therefore, equal with the Father. ¶ *Without him.* Without his agency; his notice; the exertion of his power. Compare Matt. x. 29. This is a strong way of speaking, designed to confirm, beyond the possibility of doubt, what the evangelist had just said. He says, therefore, in general, that all things were made by Christ. In this part of the verse, all doubt is shut out, and it is affirmed that there was no exception; that there was not a single thing, however minute or unimportant, which was not made by him. In this way John confirms what he had said in the first verse. Christ was not merely called God, but he did the works of God; and, therefore, the name is used in its proper sense as implying supreme divinity. To this same test Jesus himself appealed as proving that he was divine. Ch. v. 17; x. 37.

4. *In him was life.* The evangelist had just affirmed, ver. 3, that by the Logos or Word the world was originally created. One part of that creation consisted in breathing into man the breath of life. Gen. ii. 7. God is declared to be life, or the living God, because he is the source or fountain of life. This attribute is here ascribed to Jesus Christ. He not merely made the material worlds, but he also gave life. He was the agent by which the vegetable world became animated, by which brutes live, and by which man became a living soul, or was endowed with immortality. This was a higher proof that the Word was God, than the creation of the material worlds. But there is another sense in which he was *life*. The new creation, or the renovation of man, and restoration from a state of sin, is often com-



5 And the light shineth in <sup>1</sup> darkness; and the darkness comprehended <sup>2</sup> it not.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iii. 19; xii. 36. <sup>2</sup> Job. xxiv. 13—17. Prov. i. 22, 29, 30. Rom. i. 28. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

pared with the first creation; and as the Logos was the source of life then, so in a similar, but higher sense, he is the source of life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. Eph. ii. 1. And it is probably in reference to this, that he is so often called life in the writings of John. Ch. v. 26; vi. 33; xi. 25. 1 John v. 20. See also Acts iii. 15. Col. iii. 4. 1 John i. 1, 2; v. 11. The meaning is, that he is the source, or the fountain of both natural and spiritual life. Of course he has the attributes of God. ¶ *The life was the light of men.* Light is that by which we see objects distinctly. The light of the sun enables us to discern the form, distance, magnitude, and relation of objects, and prevents the perplexities and dangers which result from a state of darkness. Light is in all languages, therefore, put for knowledge, for whatever enables us to discern our duty, and the path of safety, for whatever saves us from the evils of ignorance and error. "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light." Eph. v. 13. See Isa. viii. 20; ix. 2. The Messiah was predicted as the light of the church. Isa. ix. 2, compared with Matt. iv. 15, 16. Isa. lx. 1. See ch. viii. 12; xii. 35, 36, 46. The meaning is, that the Logos, or Word of God, is the instructor or teacher of mankind. He instructed men before his advent by his direct agency in giving man reason or understanding; in giving his law, for the law was ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator, Gal. iii. 19; by his personal ministry when on earth; by his Spirit, ch. xiv. 16, 26; and by his ministers since. Eph. iv. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 28.

5. *The light shineth in darkness.* Darkness, in the Bible, commonly denotes ignorance, guilt, or misery. See Isa. ix. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 16. Acts xxvi. 18. Rom. xiii. 12. Eph. v. 8, 11. It refers here to a wicked and ignorant people. When it is said that the light shineth in darkness, it is meant that the Lord Jesus came to teach an ignorant, benighted, and wicked world. This has always been the case. It was so when he sent his prophets; it

6 ¶ There was a man <sup>2</sup> sent from God, whose name was John.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 33. Isa. xl. 3—5. Mal. iii. 1—4. Luke iii. 2, 3.

was so during his own ministry; and it has been so in every age since. His efforts to enlighten and save men have been like light struggling to penetrate a thick, dense cloud; and though a few rays may pierce the gloom, yet the great mass is still an impenetrable shade. ¶ *Comprehended it not.* The word means, admitted it not, or received it not. The word comprehend with us means to understand. This is not the meaning of the original. The darkness did not receive or admit the rays of light; the shades were so thick that the light could not penetrate them; or, to drop the figure, men were so ignorant, so guilty, and debased, that they did not appreciate the value of his instructions; they despised and rejected him. And so it is still. The great mass of men, sunk in sin, will not receive the teachings of Christ, and be enlightened and saved by him. Sin always blinds the mind to the beauty and excellency of the character of the Lord Jesus. It indisposes the mind to receive his instructions, just as darkness has no affinity for light, and if the one exists, the other must be displaced.

6. *A man sent from God.* See Matt. iii. The evangelist proceeds now to show that John was not the Messiah, and to state the true nature of his office as Christ's forerunner. Many had supposed that he was the Christ, but this opinion the evangelist corrects. Yet he admits that he was sent from God; that he was divinely commissioned. Though he denied that he was the Messiah, yet he did not deny that he was sent from or by heaven on an important errand to men. Some have supposed that the sole design of this Gospel was to show that John the Baptist was not the Messiah. Though there is no foundation for this opinion, yet there is no doubt that one object was to show this. The main design was to show that Jesus was the Christ. Ch. xx. 31. To do this, it was proper in the beginning to prove that John was not the Messiah. And this might have been at that time an important object. John made many disciples. Matt. iii. 5. Many persons supposed

7 The same came for<sup>1</sup> a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He<sup>2</sup> was not that Light, but

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 19, 26, 27, 29; ch. iii. 26—36; v. 33—35.  
<sup>2</sup> Ver. 20; ch. iii. 28. Acts xix. 4.

that he might be the Messiah. Ch. i. 19. Luke iii. 15. Many of these disciples of John the Baptist remained at Ephesus, the very place where this Gospel is supposed to have been written, long after the ascension of Jesus. Acts xix. 1—3. It is not improbable that there might have been many others who adhered to John, and perhaps many who supposed that he was the Messiah. On these accounts, it was important for the evangelist to show that John was not the Christ, and to show also that he, who was extensively admitted to be a prophet, was an important witness to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. The evangelist in the first four verses stated that the Word was divine; he now proceeds to state the proof that he was a man, and was the Messiah. The first evidence adduced, is the testimony of John the Baptist.

7, 8. *For a witness.* To give testimony. He came to prepare the minds of the people to receive the Messiah, Matt. iii.; Luke iii.; to lead them by repentance to God, and to point out the Messiah to Israel when he came. Ch. i. 31. ¶ *Of the light.* That is, of the Messiah. Compare Isa. lx. 1. ¶ *That all men, &c.* That was the object of John's testimony, that all men might believe. He designed to prepare them to believe; to announce that the Messiah was about to come; to direct the minds of men to him, and thus to fit them to believe when he came. Thus he baptized them, saying, "That they should believe on him who should come after him." Acts xix. 4. And thus he produced a very general expectation that the Christ was about to come. The testimony of John was peculiarly valuable on the following accounts: 1. It was made when he had no personal acquaintance with Jesus of Nazareth, and of course there could have been no collusion, or agreement to deceive. Ch. i. 31. 2. It was sufficiently long before he came to excite general attention, and to fix the mind on it. 3. It was that of a man

was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light,<sup>3</sup> which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 4; ch. vi. 32. Isa. xlix. 6. 1 John ii. 8; v. 20.

acknowledged by all to be a prophet of God, "for all men held John to be a prophet." Matt. xxi. 26. 4. It was for the express purpose of declaring beforehand that the Messiah was about to appear. 5. It was disinterested. He was himself extremely popular. Many were disposed to receive him as the Messiah. It was evidently in his power to form a large party, and to be regarded extensively as the Christ. This was the highest honour to which a Jew could aspire; and it shows the value of John's testimony that he was willing to lay all his honours at the feet of Jesus, and to acknowledge that he was unworthy to perform for him the office of the humblest servant. Matt. iii. 11. ¶ *Through him.* Through John, or by means of his testimony. ¶ *Was not that light.* Was not the Messiah. This is an explicit declaration designed to satisfy all the disciples of John. The evidence that he was not the Messiah he states in the following verses.

From the conduct of John here, we may learn: 1. The duty of laying all our honours at the feet of Jesus. 2. As John came that all might believe, so it is no less true of the ministry of Jesus himself. He came for a similar purpose, and we may all, therefore, trust in him for salvation. 3. We should not rely too much on ministers of the gospel. They cannot save us any more than John could; and their office, as his was, is simply to direct men to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

9. *That was the true light.* Not John, but the Messiah. He was not a false, uncertain, dangerous guide, but was a guide, true, real, steady, and worthy of confidence. A false light is one that leads to danger or error, as a false beacon on the shores of the ocean may lead ships to quicksands or rocks, or an *ignis fatuus* may conduct the traveller to fens, and precipices, and death. A true light is one that does not deceive us, as the true beacon may guide us into port, or warn us

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and <sup>1</sup> the world knew him not.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 5; ch. xvii. 25. Matt. xi. 27. 1 Cor. i. 21; ii. 8.

of danger. Christ leads none astray. All false teachers do. ¶ *That lighteth.* That enlightens. He removes darkness, error, ignorance, from the mind. ¶ *Every man.* This is an expression denoting, in general, the whole human race, Jews and Gentiles. John preached to the Jews. Jesus came "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as to be the "glory of the people of Israel." Luke ii. 32. ¶ *That cometh into the world.* The phrase in the original is ambiguous. The word translated, *that cometh*, may either refer to the light, or to the word man. So that it may mean either, "this true light that cometh into the world, enlightens all," or, "it enlightens every man that cometh into the world." Many critics, and among the fathers, Cyril and Augustine, have preferred the former, and translated it, "The true light was he who, coming into the world, enlightened every man." The principal reasons for this are, 1. That the Messiah is often spoken of as he that cometh into the world. See ch. vi. 14; xviii. 37. 2. He is often distinguished as "the light that cometh into the world." Ch. iii. 19. "This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world." Ch. xii. 46. "I am come a light into the world." Christ may be said to do what is accomplished by his command, or appointment. This passage means, therefore, that by his own personal ministry, and by his Spirit and apostles, light, or teaching, is afforded to all. It does not mean that every individual of the human family is enlightened with the knowledge of the gospel, for this never yet has been. But it means, 1. That this light is not confined to the Jew, but is extended to all, Jews and Gentiles. 2. That it is provided for all, and offered to all. 3. It is not affirmed that at the time that John wrote, all were actually enlightened, but the word *lighteth* has the form of the future. "This is that light so long expected and predicted, which, as the result of its coming into the world, will ultimately enlighten all nations."

10. *He was in the world.* This refers,

11 He <sup>2</sup> came unto his own,<sup>3</sup> and his own received him not.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xv. 24. Acts iii. 26; xiii. 46. Rom. ix. 4, 5; xv. 8. Gal. iv. 4, 5. <sup>3</sup> Ch. iii. 32. Isa. llii. 2, 3. Luke xix. 14; xx. 12-13. Acts vii. 51, -52.

probably, not to his pre-existence, but to the fact that he became incarnate; that he dwelt among men. ¶ *And the world was made by him.* This is a repetition of what is said in ver. 3. Not only man, but all material things, were made by him. These facts are mentioned here to make what is said immediately after more striking, to wit: That men did not receive him. The proofs which he furnished that they ought to receive him were 1. Those given while he was in the world; the miracles that he wrought, and his instructions. And, 2. The fact that the world was made by him. It was remarkable that the world did not know or approve its own maker. ¶ *The world knew him not.* The word *knew* is sometimes used in the sense of approving or loving. Psa. i. 6. Matt. vii. 23. In this sense it may be used here. The world did not love or approve him, but rejected him, and put him to death. Or it may mean that they did not understand, or know, that he was the Messiah. For had the Jews known and believed that he was the Messiah, they would not have put him to death. 1 Cor. ii. 8. "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Yet they might have known it, and, therefore, they are not the less to blame.

11. *He came unto his own.* His own land or country. It was called his land because it was the place of his birth. Also, because it was the chosen land where God delighted to dwell, and to manifest his favour. See Isa. v. 1-7. Over that land the laws of God had been extended; and that land had been regarded as peculiarly his. Psa. cxlv. 19, 20. ¶ *His own.* His own people. There is a distinction in the original words, which is not preserved in the translation. It may be thus expressed "He came to his own land, and his own people received him not." They were his people, because God had chosen them to be his above all other nations; had given to them his laws; and had signally protected and favoured them. Deut. vi.

12 But as many <sup>1</sup> as received him, to them gave he <sup>2</sup> power to become the sons of God, *even* to them <sup>3</sup> that believe on his name :

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lvi. 4, 5. Rom. viii. 15. 1 John iii. 1. Or, *the right*; or, *privilege*. <sup>2</sup> Gal. iii. 26.

; xiv. 2. ¶ *Received him not.* Did not acknowledge him to be the Messiah. They rejected him; put him to death preceably to the prophecy. Isa. liii. 3.

From this we learn, 1. That it is reasonable to expect that those who have been peculiarly favoured, should welcome the message of God. He had a right to respect, after all that had been done for the Jews, that they would receive the message of eternal life. So he has a right to expect that we should embrace him and be saved. Yet, 2. It is not the abundance of mercies that inclines men to seek God. The Jews had been signally favoured, yet they rejected him. So, many in Christian lands, live and die rejecting the Lord Jesus. 3. Men are alike in every age. He would reject the Saviour if left to themselves. All men are by nature wicked. There is no more certain and universal proof of it, than the universal rejection of the Lord Jesus.

12. *To as many as received him.* The Gentiles; the people; the scribes and Pharisees rejected him. A few in his lifetime received him, and many more after his death. *To receive him*, here, means to believe on him. This is expressed at the end of the verse. ¶ *Gave power.* This is more appropriately ordered in the margin by the word privilege. ¶ *Sons of God.* Children of God by adoption. See Note, Matt. i.

Christians are called sons of God. 1. Because they are adopted by him. 1 John i. 1. 2. Because they are like him; they resemble him, and have his spirit. 3. They are united to the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, are regarded by him as his brethren, Matt. xxv. 40; and are, therefore, regarded as the children of the Most High. *In his name.* This is another way of saying, believeth in him. The name of a person is often put for the person himself. Ch. ii. 23; iii. 18. 1 John v. 13. From this verse we learn, 1. That to be a child of God is a privilege, far more so than to be a child of a man, though in the highest degree rich, or learned, or

13 Which were born, <sup>4</sup> not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 33—41. Matt. iii. 9. Rom. ix. 7—9. Jas. i. 18.

honoured. Christians are, therefore, more honoured than any other men. 2. God gave them this privilege. It is not by their own works or deserts: it is because God chose to impart this blessing to them. Ch. xv. 16. Eph. ii. 8. 3. This favour is given only to those who believe on him. All others are the children of the wicked one; and no one who has not confidence in God can be regarded as his child. No parent would acknowledge one for his child or approve of him, who had no confidence in him; who doubted or denied all he said, and who despised all his goodness. Yet this the sinner constantly does toward God, and he cannot, therefore, be called his son.

13. *Which were born.* This doubtless refers to the new birth, or to the great change in the sinner's mind, called regeneration, or conversion. It means that they did not become the children of God in virtue of their birth; or because they were the children of Jews, or of pious parents. The phrase "to be born," is often used to denote this change. Compare ch. iii. 3—8. 1 John ii. 29. It illustrates clearly and beautifully, this great change. The natural birth introduces us to life. This is the beginning of spiritual life. Before, the sinner was dead in sins. Eph. ii. 1. Now he begins to live for God. Before, he was in darkness. Now he is ushered into life. And as the natural birth is the beginning of life, so to be born of God is to be introduced to real life, to light, to happiness, and to the favour of God. The term expresses at once the greatness of the change and its nature. ¶ *Not of blood.* Gr. plural. Not of bloods; i. e. not of man. Compare Matt. xxvii. 4. The Jews prided themselves on being the descendants of Abraham. Matt. iii. 9. They supposed that it was proof of the favour of God to be descended from such an illustrious ancestry. In this passage this notion is corrected. It is not because men are descended from an illustrious or pious parentage that they are entitled to the favour of God; or per-

14 And the Word<sup>1</sup> was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and

<sup>1</sup> Isa. vii. 14. Matt. i. 16, 20—23. Luke i. 35. Rom. i. 3, 4. Phil. ii. 6—8. Heb. ii. 11, 14—17. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

haps the meaning may be, not because there is a union of illustrious lines of ancestry or bloods in them. The law of Christ's kingdom is different from what the Jews supposed. Compare 1 Peter i. 23. It was necessary to be born of God by regeneration. Possibly it may mean that they did not become children of God by the bloody rite of circumcision, as many of the Jews supposed they did. This is agreeable to the declaration of Paul in Rom. ii. 28, 29. *Nor of the will of the flesh.* Not by natural generation. ¶ *Nor of the will of man.* This may refer, perhaps, to the will of man in adopting a child, as the former phrases do to the natural birth; and the design of using these three phrases may have been to say that they became the children of God, not in virtue of their descent from illustrious parents like Abraham; not by their natural birth; and not by being adopted by a pious man. None of the ways by which we become entitled to the privileges of children of men can give us a title to be called the sons of God. It is not by human power, or agency, that men become children of the Most High. ¶ *But of God.* That is, God produces the change, and confers the privilege of being called his children. The heart is changed by his power. And no privilege of birth, no unaided effort of man, no works of ours, can produce this change. At the same time, it is true that no man is renewed who does not himself desire and will to be a believer, for the effect of the change is on his will, Psa. cx. 3; and no one is changed who does not strive to enter in at the strait gate. Phil. ii. 12. This important verse, therefore, teaches us: 1. That if men are saved they must be born again. 2. That their salvation is not the result of their birth, or of any honourable or pious parentage. 3. That the children of the rich and the noble, as well as of the poor, must be born of God if they will be saved. 4. That the children of pious parents must be born again, or they cannot be saved. They will not go to heaven simply because their parents

we<sup>2</sup> beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father,) full<sup>3</sup> of grace and truth.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. i. 17. 1 John i. 1, 2. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xlv. 2. Col. ii. 3, 9.

are Christians. 5. That this work is the work of God, and no man can do it for us. 6. That we should forsake all human dependence, cast off all confidence in the flesh, and go at once to the throne of grace, and beseech of God to adopt us into his family and save our souls from death.

14. *And the Word was made flesh.* The word *flesh* here is evidently used to denote human nature, or man. See Matt. xvi. 17; xix. 5; xxiv. 22. Luke iii. 6. Rom. i. 3; ix. 5. The Word was made man. This is commonly expressed by saying that he became incarnate. When we say that a being becomes incarnate, we mean that one of a higher order than man and of a different nature, assumes the appearance of man, or becomes a man. Here it is meant that "the Word," or the second person of the Trinity, whom John had just proved to be equal with God, became a man, or was united with the man Jesus of Nazareth, so that it might be said that he was made flesh. ¶ *Was made.* This is the same word that is used in ver. 3: "All things were made by him." It is not simply affirmed that he was flesh, but was made flesh, implying that he had pre-existence, agreeably to ver. 1. This is in accordance with the doctrine of the scriptures elsewhere. Heb. x. 5. "A body hast thou prepared me." Heb. ii. 14. "As the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." 1 John iv. 2. "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." See also 1 Tim. iii. 16. Phil. ii. 6. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Luke i. 35. The expression then means that he became a man, and that he became such by the power of God providing for him a body. It cannot mean that the divine nature was changed into the human, for that could not be. But it means, that the Logos became so intimately united to Jesus that it might be said that he was a man, as the soul becomes so united to the body and the animal life that we may say that it is one person, or a man. ¶ *And dwelt among us.* The word in the original denotes dwelt as in a tabernacle or tent with us;

## CHAPTER I.

*Wilderness of Judæa.*

John<sup>1</sup> bare witness of him,  
28—36; v. 33—35. Matt. iii. 11.

and cried, saying, This was he of  
whom I spake, He that cometh

have supposed that John means the human body was a tabernacle for the Logos to abide in, in the tabernacle among the Jews he Shechinah, or visible symbolwelt. But it is not necessary to him. The object of John was that the Word became incarnate. He appeals to various evidences that he dwelt among them; sooth them; ate, drank, slept, and so on for years, so that they "saw their eyes, they looked upon their hands handled him." 1

To dwell in a tent with one, as to be in his family; and says he tabernacled with them, that he was with them as a friend, of a family, so that they had opportunity of becoming familiarly with him, and could not be so supposing that he was really [We beheld his glory. This is of what he was affirming, that of God became man. The first they had seen him as a man. He that they had seen him in his glory as God and man united in, constituting him the unequalled Father. There is no doubt that reference here to the transfiguration holy mount. See Matt. xvii. of this same evidence Peter also 2 Pet. i. 16—18. John was a witness of that scene, and says, "we beheld his glory."

2. The word *glory* here means ignity, splendour. ¶ *The glory only begotten of the Father.* which was appropriate to the Son of God. Such glory as could belong to no other, therefore properly expressed his character. This glory was seen on the mount, and to this John Jesus special reference. It was his miracles, his doctrine, his life, his ascension; all of which as to illustrate the perfections of the glory that belongs only to God. ¶ *Only begotten.* is never applied by John to Jesus Christ. It is applied by James to the Saviour, ch. i. 14,

18; iii. 16, 18. 1 John iv. 9. It means literally an only child. Then, as an only child is peculiarly dear to a parent, it means one that is especially beloved. Compare Gen. xxii. 2, 12, 16. Jer. vi. 26. Zech. xii. 10. On both these accounts it is bestowed on the Saviour. 1. As he was eminently the Son of God, sustaining a peculiar relation to him in his divine nature, exalted above all men and angels, and thus worthy to be called by way of eminence his only Son. Saints are called his sons, or children, because they are born of his Spirit and are like him. But the Lord Jesus is exalted far above all, and deserves eminently to be called his only-begotten Son. 2. He was peculiarly dear to God, and therefore this appellation, implying tender affection, is bestowed on him. ¶ *Full of grace and truth.* The word *full* here refers to the Word made flesh, which is declared to be full of grace and truth. The word *grace* means favours, gifts, tokens of beneficence. He was kind, merciful, gracious, doing good to all, and seeking man's welfare by great sacrifices and love: so much so, that it might be said to be characteristic of him, or he abounded in favours to mankind. He was also full of truth. He declared the truth. In him was no falsehood. He was not like the false prophets and false Messiahs, who were wholly impostors; nor was he like the emblems and shadows of the old dispensation, which were only types of the true; but he was true in all things. He represented things as they are, and thus became the truth as well as the way and the life.

15. *John bare witness of him.* The evangelist now returns to the testimony of John the Baptist. He had stated that the Word became incarnate, and he now appeals to the testimony of John to show that he was the Messiah. ¶ *He that cometh after me.* He of whom I am the forerunner, or whose way I am come to prepare. See Notes on Matt. iii. 3. ¶ *Is preferred before me.* Is superior to me. Most critics have supposed that the words translated *is preferred* relate to time, and not to dignity, meaning that though he came after him publicly, being six months younger than John, as well as entering

after me is preferred before me :<sup>1</sup> for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness<sup>2</sup> have

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 1, 2, 30. Ch. viii. 58; xvii. 5. Isa. ix. 6. Mic. v. 2. Col. i. 17. <sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 34.

on his work after John, yet that he had existed long before him. Some, however, have understood it as our translators seem to have done, as meaning, he was worthy of more honour than I am. ¶ *He was before me.* This can refer to nothing but his pre-existence, and can be explained only on the supposition that he existed before John, or as the evangelist had before shown, from the beginning. He came after John in his public ministry, and in his human nature, but in his divine nature he had existed long before John had a being, from eternity. We may learn here that it is one mark of the true spirit of a minister of Christ, to desire and feel that Christ is always preferred to ourselves. We should keep ourselves out of view. The great object is to hold up the Saviour; and however much such ministers may be honoured or blessed, yet they should lay all at the feet of Jesus, and direct all men to him as the undivided object of affection and honour. It is the business of every Christian, as well as of every christian minister, to be a witness for Christ, and to endeavour to convince the world that he is worthy of confidence and love.

16. *Of his fulness.* In ver. 14, the evangelist has said that Christ was full of grace and truth. Of that fulness, he now says that all the disciples had received; that is, they derived from his abundant truth and mercy, grace to understand the plan of salvation, to preach the gospel, to live lives of holiness; they partook of the numerous blessings which he came to impart by his instructions and his death. These are undoubtedly not the words of John the Baptist, but of the evangelist John, the writer of this gospel. They are a continuation of what he was saying in ver. 14, the next verse being evidently thrown in as a parenthesis. The declaration had not exclusive reference probably to the apostles, but it is extended to all Christians, for all believers have received of the fulness of grace and truth that is in Christ. Compare Eph. i. 23; iii. 19. Col. i. 19; ii. 9. In all these places our Saviour is represented as the fulness of

all we received, and<sup>3</sup> grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by

<sup>3</sup> Zech. iv. 7. Matt. xiii. 12. Rom. v. 2, 17, 20. Eph. i. 6-8.

God, as abounding in mercy, as exhibiting the divine attributes, and possessing in himself all that is necessary to fill his people with truth, and grace, and love. ¶ *Grace for grace.* Many interpretations of this phrase have been proposed. The chief are briefly the following: 1. We have received, under the gospel, grace or favour, instead of what was granted under the law. And God has added by the gospel important favours to those which he gave under the law. This was first proposed by Chrysostom. 2. We, christians, have received grace answering to, or corresponding to, that which is in Jesus Christ. We are like him, in meekness, humility, &c. 3. We have received grace for grace's sake, as grace, that is, freely. We have not purchased it, nor deserved it, but God has conferred it on us freely. *Grotius.* 4. The meaning is probably, simply that we have received through him abundance of grace or favours. The Hebrews, in expressing the superlative degree of comparison, used simply to repeat the word. Thus, "pits, pits," meaning many pits. Heb. in Gen. xiv. 10. So here grace for grace may mean much grace, superlative favours bestowed on man, superior to all that had been under the law, superior to all other things that God would confer on men in this world. These favours consist in pardon, redemption, protection, sanctification, peace here, and heaven hereafter.

17. *The law was given.* The Old Testament economy. The institutions under which the Jews lived. ¶ *By Moses.* By Moses, as the servant of God. He was the great legislator of the Jews, by whom, under God, their polity was formed. The law worketh wrath, Rom. iv. 15; it was attended with many burdensome rites and ceremonies, Acts xv. 10; it was preparatory to another state of things. The gospel succeeded the law and took its place, and thus showed the greatness of the evangelical economy, as well as its grace and truth. ¶ *Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* A system of religion full of favours, and the true system was revealed by him. The old system was one of law and shadows, and burdensome rites. This

Moses, but grace<sup>1</sup> and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God<sup>2</sup> at any time; the<sup>3</sup> only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 32; xiv. 6. Psa. lxxxv. 10. Rom. v. 21. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xxxiii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 16. <sup>3</sup> 1 John iv. 9.

was full of mercy to mankind, and was true in all things. We may learn from these verses: 1. That all our mercies come from Jesus Christ. 2. All true believers receive from Christ's fullness; the best and greatest saints cannot live without him, the meanest and weakest may live by him. This excludes proud boasting that we have nothing, but we have received it; and silenceth perplexing fears that we want nothing, but we may receive it.

18. *No man hath seen God at any time.* This declaration is probably made to show the superiority of the revelation of Jesus above that of any previous dispensation. It is said, therefore, that Jesus had an intimate knowledge of God, which neither Moses nor any of the ancient prophets had possessed. God is invisible. No human eyes have seen him. But Christ had a knowledge of God which might be expressed to our apprehension by saying that he saw him. He knew him intimately and completely, and was therefore fitted to make a fuller manifestation of him. See Ch. v. 37; vi. 46; xiv. 9. Exod. xxxiii. 20. 1 John iv. 12. This passage is not meant to deny that men had witnessed manifestations of God, as when he appeared to Moses and the prophets. Compare Num. xii. 8. Isa. vi. But it is meant that no one has seen the essence of God, or had fully known God. The prophets delivered what they heard God speak; Jesus what he knew of God as his equal, and as understanding fully his nature. ¶ *The only begotten Son.* See on ver. 14. This verse shows John's sense of the meaning of that phrase, as denoting an intimate and full knowledge of God. ¶ *In the bosom of the Father.* This expression is taken from the custom among the orientals of reclining at their meals. See Note on Matt. xxiii. 6. It denotes intimacy, friendship, affection. Here it means that Jesus had a knowledge of

19 ¶ And this<sup>4</sup> is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?<sup>5</sup>

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

<sup>4</sup> Luke iii. 15—17. <sup>5</sup> Ch. x. 34. Acts xiii. 25; xix. 4. Matt. xxi. 23—27. Luke. iii. 15.

God such as one friend has of another, knowledge of his character, designs, and nature, which no one but he possesses, and which renders him therefore qualified above all others to make him known. ¶ *Hath declared him.* Hath fully revealed him, or made him known. Compare Heb. i. 1, 4. This verse shows that Jesus had a knowledge of God above that which any of the ancient prophets had, and that the fullest revelations of his character are to be expected in the gospel. By his word and Spirit he can enlighten and guide us, and lead us to the true knowledge of God. And there is no true and full knowledge of God which is not obtained through his Son. Compare 1 John ii. 22, 23.

19. *This is the record.* The word *record* here means testimony, in whatever way given. The word *record* now refers to written evidence. This is not its meaning here. John's testimony was given without writing. ¶ *When the Jews sent.* John's fame was great. See Matt. iii. 5. It spread to Jerusalem, and the nation seemed to suppose from the character of his preaching that he was the Messiah. Luke iii. 15. The great council of the nation, or the sanhedrim, had among other things the charge of religion. They felt it to be their duty, therefore, to inquire into the character and claims of John, and to learn whether he was the Messiah. It is not improbable that they wished that he might be the long-expected Christ, and were prepared to regard him as such. ¶ *Priests.* Levites. See Notes, Matt. iii. These were probably members of the sanhedrim.

20. *I am not the Christ.* This confession shows that John was not an impostor. He had a wide reputation. The nation was expecting that the Messiah was about to come, and multitudes were ready to believe that John was he. Luke iii. 15. If John had been an impostor, he would



21 And they asked him, What then? <sup>1</sup> Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou <sup>2</sup> that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

<sup>1</sup> Mal. iv. 5. Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 10-13. Luke i. 17. <sup>2</sup> Or, a prophet. Deut. xviii. 15-18. Matt. xi. 9-11; xvi. 14.

23 He <sup>3</sup> said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet <sup>4</sup> Esaias.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that

<sup>3</sup> Ch. iii. 26. Matt. iii. 3. Mark i. 3. Luke iii. 4. <sup>4</sup> Isa. xl. 5.

have taken advantage of this excited state of public feeling, proclaimed himself to be the Messiah, and formed a large party in his own favour. The fact that he did not do so, is full proof that he did not intend to impose on men, but came only as the forerunner of Christ. And his example shows that all Christians, and especially all Christian ministers, however much they may be honoured and blessed, should be willing to lay all their honours at the feet of Jesus, to keep themselves back, and to give those honours only to the Son of God. To do this is one eminent mark of the true spirit of a minister of the gospel.

21. *Art thou Elias?* The Greek way of writing Elijah. The Jews expected that Elijah would appear before the Messiah came. See Note, Matt. xi. 14. They supposed that it would be the real Elijah returned from heaven. In this sense John denied that he was Elijah; but he did not deny that he was the Elias which the prophet intended, Mal. iv. 5, for he immediately proceeds to state, ver. 23, that he was sent to prepare the way of the Lord. So that while he corrected their false notions about Elijah, he so clearly stated to them his true character, that they might understand that he was really the one predicted as Elijah. ¶ *That prophet.* It is possible that the Jews supposed that not only Elijah would reappear before the coming of the Messiah, but also Jeremiah. See Note, Matt. xi. 14. Some have supposed, however, that this question has reference to the prediction of Moses in Deut. xviii. 15.

23. *I am the voice, &c.* See Note, Matt. iii. 3.

24. *Were of the Pharisees.* For an account of this sect, see Note, Matt. iii. 7. Why they are particularly mentioned is not certainly known. Many of the Sad-

ducees came to his baptism. Matt. iii. 7. But it seems that they did not join in sending to him to know what was the design of John. This circumstance is one of those incidental and delicate allusions which would occur to no impostor in forging a book, and which show that the writers of the New Testament were honest men, and knew what they affirmed. For, 1. The Pharisees composed a great part of the sanhedrim. Acts xxiii. 6. It is probable that a deputation from the sanhedrim would be of that party. 2. The Pharisees were very tenacious of rites and customs, of traditions and ceremonies. They observed many. They believed that they were lawful. Mark vii. 3, 4. Of course, they believed that those rites might be increased; but they did not suppose that it could be done except by the authority of a prophet, or of the Messiah. When, therefore, John came baptizing, adding a rite to be observed by his followers, baptizing not Gentiles as proselytes to Judaism, but Jews themselves, the question was, whether he had authority to institute a new rite; whether it was to be received among the ceremonies of religion. In this question the Sadducees felt no interest, for they rejected all such rites at once. But the Pharisees thought it was worth inquiry; and it was a question on which they felt themselves specially called on to act as the guardians of the ceremonies of religion.

25. *Why baptizest thou then, &c.* Baptism on receiving a proselyte from heathenism was common before the time of John. But it was not customary to baptize a Jew. John had changed the custom. He baptized all; and they were desirous of knowing by what authority he made such a change in the religious customs of the nation. They presumed from

rist, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, baptize with water: but there standeth one<sup>1</sup> among you, whom know not;

27 He it is, who coming after

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 10, 11; ch. viii. 19; xvi. 3; xvii. 3, Mal. iii. 1.

fact that he introduced that change, that he claimed to be a prophet, or the Christ. They supposed that no one would erupt without pretending at least authority from heaven. As he disclaimed the character of Christ, and of the prophet, they asked whence he derived his authority. As he had just before applied himself a prediction that they all considered as belonging to the forerunner of Christ, they might have understood why baptized. But they were blind, and manifested, as all sinners do, a remarkable slowness in understanding the plain-cases in religion.

26. *I baptize.* He did not deny it, nor did he condescend to state his authority. That he had given. He admitted that he had introduced an important change in the rites of religion. And he went on to tell them that this was not all, easier and more important changes would soon take place without their authority. The Messiah was about to come, and the power was about to depart from his hands. ¶ *There standeth one.* There he is. ¶ *Among you.* In the midst of the multitude. He is undistinguished among the multitude. The Messiah had already come, and was about to be manifested to the people. It was not until the next day, ver. 29, that Jesus was manifested, proclaimed as the Messiah. But it is improbable that he was then among the people that were assembled near the Jordan, and mingled with them, though he was undistinguished. He had gone before probably with the multitudes that were attracted by the fame of John, and had gone without attracting attention, though his real object was to receive baptism in this public manner, and to be exalted and proclaimed as the Messiah. *Whom ye know not.* Jesus was not declared publicly to be the Christ. Though it is probable that he was then

me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in Bethabara<sup>2</sup> beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 ¶ The next day John seeth

<sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 23; x. 40. Judg. vii. 24; xii. 5.

among the multitude, yet he was not known as the Messiah. We may hence learn: 1. That there is often great excellency in the world that is obscure, undistinguished, and unknown. Jesus was near to all that people, but they were not conscious of his presence, and he was retired and obscure. Though the greatest personage ever in the world, yet he was not externally distinguished from others. 2. Jesus may be near to men of the world, and yet they know him not. He is every where by his Spirit, yet few know it, and few are desirous of knowing it.

27. *Whose shoe's latchet.* Note, Matt. iii. 11. The latchet of sandals was the string or thong by which they were fastened to the feet. To unloose them was the office of a servant, and John means, therefore, that he was unworthy to perform the lowest office for the Messiah. This was remarkable humility. John was well known. He was highly honoured. Thousands came to hear him. Jesus was at that time unknown. But John was unworthy to perform the humblest office for Jesus. So we all should be willing to lay all that we have at the feet of Christ, and feel that we are unworthy to be his lowest servants.

28. *In Bethabara.* Almost all the ancient manuscripts and versions, instead of *Bethabara* here have *Bothany*, and this is doubtless the true reading. There was a Bethany about two miles east of Jerusalem, but there was also another in the tribe of Reuben, on the east side of the river Jordan, and in this place probably John was baptizing. It is about twelve miles above Jericho. ¶ *Beyond Jordan.* On the east side of the river Jordan.

29. *The next day.* The day after the Jews made inquiry whether he was the Christ. ¶ *Behold the Lamb of God.* A lamb among the Jews was killed and

Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb <sup>1</sup> of God, which <sup>2</sup> taketh<sup>3</sup> away the sin of the world.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 3. Isa. liii. 7, 11. Rev. v. 6.  
<sup>2</sup> Or, beareth. Heb. ix. 28. <sup>3</sup> Acts xiii. 39.  
<sup>1</sup> Pet. ii. 24. Rev. i. 5.

eaten at the passover, to commemorate their deliverance from Egypt. Exod. xii. A lamb was offered in the temple every morning and evening, as a part of the daily worship. Exod. xxix. 38, 39. The Messiah was predicted as a lamb led to the slaughter, to show his patience in his sufferings and readiness to die for man. Isa. liii. 7. A lamb among the Jews was also an emblem of patience, meekness, gentleness. On all these accounts, rather than on any one of them alone, Jesus was called the Lamb. He was innocent, 1 Pet. ii. 23—25; he was a sacrifice for sin, the substance represented by the daily offering of the lamb, and slain at the usual time of the evening sacrifice, Luke xxiii. 44—46; and he was what was represented by the passover, turning away the anger of God, and saving us by his blood from vengeance and eternal death. 1 Cor. v. 7. ¶ *Of God.* Appointed by God; approved by God, and most dear to him. The sacrifice which he chose, and which he approves to save men from death. ¶ *Which taketh away.* This denotes his bearing the sins of the world, or the sufferings which made an atonement for sin. Compare Isa. liii. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 1. John iii. 5. He takes away sin, by bearing or suffering in his own body the pains which God appointed to show his sense of the evil of sin, thus magnifying the law, and rendering it consistent for him to pardon. Rom. iii. 24, 25. ¶ *Of the world.* Of all mankind, Jew and Gentile. His work was not to be confined to the Jew, but was also to benefit the Gentile; it was not confined to any one part of the world, but was designed to

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me. Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining<sup>4</sup> on him, the same is he which baptizeth<sup>5</sup> with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 34. <sup>5</sup> Acts i. 5; ii. 4.

open the way of pardon to all men. He was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. 1 John ii. 2. See Notes on 2 Cor. v. 15.

31. *I knew him not.* John was not personally acquainted with Jesus. Though they were remotely related to each other, yet it seems that they had no personal acquaintance. John had lived chiefly in the hill country of Judea. Jesus had been employed with Joseph at Nazareth. Until Jesus came to be baptized by John, Matt. iii. 13, 14, it seems that he had no acquaintance with him. He understood that he was to announce that the Messiah was about to appear. He was sent to proclaim his coming, but he did not personally know Jesus, or that he was to be the Messiah. This proves that there could have been no collusion or agreement between them to impose on the people. ¶ *Should be made manifest.* That the Messiah should be exhibited or made known. He came to prepare the way for the Messiah, and it now appeared that the Messiah was Jesus of Nazareth. ¶ *To Israel.* To the Jews.

32. *Bare record.* Gave testimony. ¶ *I saw the Spirit, &c.* See Note, Matt. iii. 16, 17.

33, 34. *The same said, &c.* This was the sign by which he was to know the Messiah. He was to see the Spirit descending like a dove, and abiding on him. It does not follow, however, that he had no intimation before this that Jesus was the Christ, but it means that by this he should infallibly know it. From Matt. iii. 13, 14, it seems that John supposed,

35 ¶ Again the next day after he stood, and two of his disciples; 36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, <sup>1</sup> Behold the Lamb of God!

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 29. Isa. xlv. 22; lxxv. 1, 2. Heb. 2. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

Before the baptism of Jesus, that he seemed to be the Messiah, and that he believed it. But the infallible, certain testimony in the case, was the descent of the Holy Spirit on him at his baptism. *That this is the Son of God.* This was distinctly declared by a voice from heaven at his baptism. Matt. iii. 17. This he heard, and testified that he had heard it.

35. *The next day.* The day after his remarkable testimony that Jesus was the Son of God. This testimony of John is noted because it was the main design of the evangelist to show that Jesus was the Messiah. To do this, he adduces the aided and repeated testimony of John the Baptist. This was impartial and aided evidence in the case, and hence so particularly dwells upon it. ¶ *John stood.* Or, was standing. This was properly apart from the multitude. ¶ *Two of his disciples.* One of these was Andrew, ver. 40; and it is not improbable that the other was the writer of this Gospel.

36. *Looking upon Jesus, &c.* Fixing his eyes intently upon him. Singling him out, and regarding him with special attention. Contemplating him as the long-expected Messiah and Deliverer of the world. In this way should all ministers fix the eye on the Son of God, and direct others to him. ¶ *As he walked.* While Jesus was walking.

37. *They followed Jesus.* They had been the disciples of John. His office was to point out the Messiah. When it was done, they left at once their master and teacher, John, and followed the long-expected Messiah. This shows that John was sincere, that he was not desirous of forming a party, or of building a sect; that he was willing that all his hearers should follow Christ. The object of ministers should not be to build up themselves. It is to point men to the Saviour. And ministers, however popu-

lar or successful, should be willing that their disciples should look to Christ rather than to them; nay, should forget them, and look away from them, to tread in the footsteps of the Son of God. And the conduct of these disciples shows us that we should forsake all and follow Jesus when he is pointed out to us as the Messiah. We should not delay nor debate the matter, but leave at once all our old teachers and guides, and follow the Lamb of God. And we should do that, too, though the Lord Jesus may appear to the world, as he did to the multitude of the Jews, as poor, unknown, and despised. Reader, have you left all and followed him? Have you forsaken all the guides of false philosophy and deceit, of sin and infidelity, and committed yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said

<sup>2</sup> Ch. iv. 39—42. Rom. x. 17. Eph. iv. 22. Rev. xxii. 17.

38. *What seek ye?* This was not asked to obtain information. Compare ver. 48. It was not a harsh reproof, forbidding them to follow him. Compare Matt. xi. 28—30. It was a kind inquiry respecting their desires; an invitation to lay open their mind, to state their wishes, and to express all their feelings respecting the Messiah and their own salvation. We may learn, 1. That Jesus regards the first inclinations of the soul to follow him. He turned towards these disciples, and he will incline his ear to all who begin to approach him for salvation. 2. Jesus is ready to hear their requests, and to answer them. 3. Ministers of the gospel, and all other Christians, should be accessible, kind, and tender, towards all who are inquiring the way to life. In conformity with their Master, they should be willing to aid all those who look to them for guidance and help in the great work of their salvation. ¶ *Rabbi.* This was a Jewish title conferred somewhat as the title of Doctor of Divinity now is, and meaning literally master. Our Saviour solemnly forbade his disciples to wear that title. See Notes on Matt. xxiii. 8. The

unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest<sup>1</sup> thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day:<sup>2</sup> for it was about<sup>3</sup> the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *abidest*. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 23. Rev. iii. 20.  
<sup>3</sup> i.e. two hours before night. Luke xxiv. 29.

fact that John interpreted this word shows that he wrote his gospel, not for the Jews only, but for those who did not understand the Hebrew language. It is supposed to have been written at Ephesus. ¶ *Where dwellest thou?* This question they probably asked him in order to signify their wish to be with him, and to be instructed by him. They wished more fully to listen to him than they could now by the way-side. They were unwilling to interrupt him in his travelling. Religion teaches men true politeness, or a disposition to consult the convenience of others, and not improperly to molest them, or to break in upon them when engaged. It also teaches us to desire to be with Christ; to seek every opportunity of communion with him, and chiefly to desire to be with him where he is when we leave this world. Compare Phil. i. 23.

39. *Come and see.* This was a kind and gracious answer. He did not put them off to some future period. Then, as now, he was willing that they should come at once and enjoy as they desired the full opportunity of his conversation. Jesus is ever ready to admit those who seek him to his presence and favour. ¶ *Abode with him.* Remained with him. This was probably the dwelling of some friend of Jesus. His usual home was at Nazareth. ¶ *The tenth hour.* The Jews divided their day into twelve equal parts, beginning at sunrise. If John used their mode of computation, it was about four o'clock in the afternoon. The Romans divided time as we do, beginning at midnight. If John used this mode, it was about ten o'clock in the forenoon. It is not certain which he used.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon,<sup>4</sup> and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted,<sup>5</sup> the Christ.

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou<sup>6</sup> shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation.<sup>7</sup> A stone.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. iv. 28, 29. <sup>2</sup> Kin. vii 9. Isa. ii. 3-5. <sup>5</sup> Or, *the anointed.* <sup>6</sup> Matt. xvi. 18.  
<sup>7</sup> Or, *Peter.*

41. *He first findeth.* He found him and told him about Jesus, before he brought him to Jesus. ¶ *We have found the Messias.* They had learned from the testimony of John, and now had been more fully convinced from conversation with Jesus, that he was the Messiah. The word Messiah or Messias is Hebrew, and means the same as the Greek word Christ, anointed. See Note, Matt. i. 1. From the conduct of Andrew, we may learn that it is the nature of religion to desire that others may possess it. It does not lead us to monopolize it, or to hide it under a bushel; but it seeks that others also may be brought to the Saviour. It does not wait for them to come, but it goes for them; it seeks them out, and tells them that a Saviour is found. Young converts should seek their friends and neighbours, and tell them of a Saviour; and not only their relatives, but the salvation of the whole world, that all may come to Jesus and be saved.

42. *Cephas.* This is a Syriac word, meaning the same as the Greek word Peter, a stone. See Note, Matt. xvi. 17. The stone, or rock is a symbol of firmness and steadiness of character; a trait in Peter's character, after the ascension of Jesus, that was very remarkable. Before the death of Jesus he was rash, headlong, variable; and it is one proof of the omniscience of Jesus, that he saw that Peter would possess a character that would be expressed appropriately by the word *rock*. The word *Jona* is a Hebrew word, whose original signification is a *dove*. It may be that Jesus had respect to that when he gave Simon the name Peter. You now bear a name emblematic of timidity and

43 ¶ The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses<sup>1</sup> in the law,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 45, 46. Gen. iii. 15; xlix. 10. Deut. xviii. 18—22. Luke xxiv. 27, 44.

inconstancy. You shall be called by a name denoting firmness and constancy.

43. *Would go forth.* Was about to go. ¶ *Into Galilee.* He was now in Judea, where he went to be baptized by John. He was now about to return to his native country. ¶ *Findeth Philip.* This does not refer to his calling these disciples to be apostles, for that took place at the Sea of Tiberias. Matt. iv. 18. But it refers to their being convinced that he was the Christ. This is the object of the evangelist, to show how and when they were convinced of this. Matthew states the time and occasion in which they were called to be apostles. John, the time in which they first became acquainted with Jesus. There is, therefore, no contradiction in the evangelists.

44. *Of Bethsaida.* See Matt. xi. 21. ¶ *The city of.* The place where Andrew and Peter dwelt.

45. *Moses, in the law.* Moses in that part of the Old Testament which he wrote, called by the Jews, the law. See Gen. iii. 15; xlix. 10. Deut. xviii. 15, 18. ¶ *And the prophets.* Isa. ix. 6, 7; liii. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Dan. ix. 24—27, &c. ¶ *Jesus of Nazareth, &c.* They spoke according to common apprehension. They spoke of him as the son of Joseph because he was commonly supposed to be. They spoke of him as dwelling at Nazareth, though they might not have been ignorant that he was born at Bethlehem.

46. *Can any good thing, &c.* The character of Nazareth was proverbially bad. To be a Galilean, or a Nazarene, was an expression of decided contempt. Ch. vii. 52. Note, Matt. ii. 23. Nathanael asked, therefore, whether it was possible that the Messiah should come from a place proverbially wicked. This

and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him,<sup>2</sup> Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold, an<sup>3</sup> Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 41, 42, 52. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxxii. 2. Rom. ii. 28, 29. Rev. xiv. 4, 5.

was a mode of judging in the case not uncommon. It is not by examining evidence, but by prejudice. Many persons suffer their minds to be filled with prejudice against religion, and then pronounce at once without examination. They refuse to examine, for they have set it down that it cannot be true. It matters not where a teacher comes from, or what is the place of his birth, provided he be authorized of God, and qualified for his work. ¶ *Come and see.* This was the best way to answer Nathanael. He did not sit down to reason with him, or speculate about the possibility that a good thing could come from Nazareth; but he asked him to go and examine for himself, to see the Lord Jesus, to hear him converse, to lay aside his prejudice, and to judge from a fair and candid examination. So we should beseech sinners to lay aside their prejudices against religion, and to be Christians, and thus make trial for themselves. If men can be persuaded to come to Jesus, all their petty and foolish objections against religion will vanish. They will be satisfied from their own experience that it is true, and in this way only will they ever be satisfied.

47. *An Israelite indeed.* One who is really an Israelite, not by birth only, but one worthy of the name. One who possesses the spirit, the piety, and the integrity, which befit a man who is really a Jew, who fears God and obeys his law. Compare Rom. ii. 28, 29; ix. 6. ¶ *No guile.* No deceit, no fraud, no hypocrisy. He is really what he professes to be, a Jew, a descendant of the patriarch Jacob; fearing and serving God. He makes no profession which he does not believe and live up to. He does not say that Nathanael was without guilt or sin, but that

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I<sup>1</sup> saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou<sup>2</sup> art the Son

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cxxxix. 1, 2. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xx. 28, 29. Matt. xiv. 33.

he had no disguise, no trick, no deceit. He was sincere and upright. This was a most honourable testimony to be borne of this man. How happy would it be if He who knows the hearts of all as he did that of Nathanael, could bear the same testimony of all who profess the religion of the gospel!

48. *Whence knowest thou me?* Nathanael was not yet acquainted with the divinity of Christ, and supposed that he had been a stranger to him. When he heard Jesus express a favourable opinion of him, he naturally inquired by what means he had any knowledge of him. His conscience testified to the truth of what Jesus said, that he had no guile, and he was anxious to know whence he had learned his character. ¶ *Before that Philip called thee.* See ver. 45. ¶ *When thou wast under the fig-tree.* It is evident that it was from something that occurred under the fig-tree that Jesus judged of his character. What that was is not recorded. It is not improbable that Nathanael was accustomed to retire to the shade of a certain tree, perhaps in his garden, or in a grove, for the purpose of meditation and prayer. The Jews were much in the habit of selecting such places for private devotion, and in such scenes of stillness and retirement there is something peculiarly favourable for meditation and prayer. Our Saviour also worshipped in such places. Compare chap. xviii. 2; Luke vi. 12. In that place of retirement it is not improbable that Nathanael was engaged in private devotion. ¶ *I saw thee.* It is clear from the narrative that Jesus did not mean to say that he was bodily present with Nathanael, and saw him; but he knew his thoughts, his desires, his secret feelings, and wishes. In this scene Nathanael understood him. We may learn, 1. That Jesus sees in

of God; thou art the King<sup>3</sup> of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him,<sup>4</sup> Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou?<sup>5</sup> Thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him,

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxi. 5; xxvii. 11. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xx. 22. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xi. 40. Matt. xxv. 29.

secret, and is therefore divine. 2. That he sees us when we little think of it. 3. That he sees us especially in our private devotions, hears our prayers, and marks our meditations. And, 4. That he judges of our character chiefly by our private devotions. Those are secret; the world sees them not; and in our closets we show what we are. How does it become us, therefore, to seek that our secret prayers and meditations be without guile and hypocrisy, and such as Jesus will approve?

49. *Rabbi. Master;* applied appropriately to Jesus, and to no one else. Matt. xxiii. 10. ¶ *The Son of God.* By this title he doubtless meant that he was the Messiah. His conscience told him that he had judged right of his character, and that therefore he must know the heart and desires of the mind. If so, he could not be a mere man, but must be the long-expected Messiah. ¶ *The King of Israel.* This was one of the titles by which the Messiah was expected; and this was the title which was affixed to his cross. Ch. xix. 19. This case of Nathanael, John adduces as another evidence that Jesus was the Christ. The great object he had in view in writing this gospel was to collect the evidence that he was the Messiah. Ch. xx. 31. A case, therefore, where Jesus searched the heart, and where his knowledge of the heart convinced a pious Jew that he was the Christ, is very properly adduced as important testimony.

50. *Greater things.* Full proof of his Messiahship, particularly what is mentioned in the following verse.

51. *Verily, verily.* In the Greek, *Amen, amen.* The word *amen* means truly, certainly, so be it, from a verb to confirm, to establish, to be true. It is often used in this gospel. When repeated, it expresses the speaker's sense of the importance of what he is about to say,

truly, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven<sup>1</sup> open, and the angels<sup>2</sup> of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

## CHAPTER II.

*The miracle at the marriage feast, 1—11.*

Ezek. i. 1.    <sup>2</sup> Gen. xxviii. 12.    Dan. vii. 10.    Acts i. 10, 11.

And the certainty that it is as he affirms. *Ye shall see.* Not, perhaps, with the dimly eyes, but you shall have evidence that it is so. The thing shall take place, and you shall be a witness of it. ¶ *Heaven open.* This is a figurative expression, noting the conferring of favours. *Psa. cviii. 23, 24:* "He opened the doors of heaven, and rained down manna." And so it denotes that God was about to work a miracle in attestation of a particular thing. See *Matt. iii. 16.* In the language, here, there is an evident allusion to the ladder that Jacob saw in a dream, and to the angels ascending and descending on it. *Gen. xxviii. 12.* It is not obable that he referred to any particular instance in which Nathanael should everally see the heavens opened. The baptism of Jesus had taken place, and there was no other instance in his life in which it is said that the heavens were opened. ¶ *Angels of God.* Those pure and holy beings that dwell in heaven, and that are employed as ministering spirits to our world. *Job. i. 14.* Good men are represented in the scriptures as being under their protection. *Gen. xxviii. 12. Psa. xci. 11, 12.* They are the agents by which God often pressed his will to men. *Gal. iii. 19. Job. ii. 2.* They are represented as strengthening the Lord Jesus and ministering unto him. Thus they aided him in the wilderness, *Mark i. 13;* and in the garden, *Luke xxii. 43;* and they were present when he rose from the dead. By their ascending and descending upon him, it is probable that he meant that Nathanael could have evidence that they came to his aid, and that he would have the kind of protection and aid from God which would show more fully that he was the Messiah. Thus his life, his many deliverances from dangers, his wisdom to confute his skilled and cunning adversaries, the scenes of his death and the attendance of angels at his

*Jesus at Capernaum, 12. And at Jerusalem clearing the temple of buyers and sellers, 13—17. Foretells his death, 18—22. Some believe, 23—25.*

AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana<sup>3</sup> of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

<sup>3</sup> Ch. iv. 46.    *Joe. xix. 28, Kanah.*

resurrection, may all be represented by the angels descending upon him, and all would show to Nathanael and the other disciples, most clearly, that he was the Son of God. ¶ *The Son of man.* A term by which he often describes himself. It shows his humility, his love for man, his willingness to be esteemed as a man. *Phil. ii. 6, 7.*

From this interview with Nathanael we may learn, 1. That Jesus searches the heart. 2. That he was truly the Messiah. 3. That he was under the protection of God. 4. That if we have faith in Jesus, it will be continually strengthened. The evidence will grow brighter and brighter. 5. That if we believe his word, we shall yet see full proof that his word is true. 6. As Jesus was under the protection of God, so shall all his friends be. God will defend and save us also, if we put our trust in him. 7. Jesus applied to himself terms expressive of humility. He was not solicitous even to be called by titles which he might claim. So we should not be ambitious of titles and honours. Ministers of the gospel most resemble him when they seek for the fewest titles, and do not aim at distinctions from each other or their brethren. See Note on *Matt. xxiii. 8.*

## CHAPTER II.

1. *And the third day.* On the third day after his conversation with Nathanael. ¶ *Cana.* This was a small town about fifteen miles north-west of Tiberias, and six miles north-east of Nazareth. It is now called Kefer Kenna; is under the government of a Turkish officer, and contains, perhaps, three hundred inhabitants, chiefly Catholics. The natives still pretend to show the place where the water was turned into wine, and even one of the large stone water-pots. Large stone pots are said to be found there, whose use seems to be unknown to the present in-



2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.<sup>1</sup>

3 And<sup>2</sup> when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, 'They have no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her,<sup>3</sup> Woman,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xiii. 4. <sup>2</sup> Eccl. x. 19. Isa. xxiv. 31. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xix. 26, 27; xx. 13, 15. Matt. xv. 28.

habitants. It was called Cana of Galilee, to distinguish it from another Cana in the tribe of Ephraim. Josh. xvi. 9. This was the native place of Nathanael. Ch. xxi. 2. ¶ *The mother of Jesus.* Mary. It is not improbable that she was a relative of the family where the marriage took place.

2. *His disciples.* Those that he had made when in Judea. These were Peter, Andrew, Philip, and Nathanael. They were not yet called to be apostles, but they believed that he was the Messiah. The miracle wrought here was doubtless to convince them more fully that he was the Christ.

3. *When they wanted wine.* A marriage feast among the Jews was commonly observed for seven or eight days. It is not probable that there would be a want of wine at the marriage itself, and it is possible, therefore, that Jesus came there some time during the marriage feast. ¶ *They have no wine.* It is not known why Mary told this to Jesus. It would seem that she had a belief that he was able to supply it, though he had as yet worked no miracle.

4. *Woman.* This term, as used here, seems to imply reproof, as if she was interfering in that which did not properly concern her. But it is evident that no such reproof or disrespect was intended by the use of the term *woman* instead of *mother*. It is the same term by which he tenderly addressed Mary Magdalene after his resurrection, ch. xx. 15, and his mother when he was on the cross. Ch. xix. 26. Compare also ch. iv. 21; Matt. xv. 28. 1 Cor. vii. 16. ¶ *What have I to do with thee?* See Note, Matt. viii. 29. This expression is sometimes used to denote indignation or contempt. See Judg. xi. 12. 2 Sam. xvi. 10. 1 Kin. xvii. 18. But it is not probable that it denoted either in this place; if it did, it was a mild reproof of Mary for attempting to

what have I to do with thee? mine<sup>4</sup> hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever<sup>5</sup> he saith unto you, do it.

6 And there were set there six

<sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 6, 30; viii. 20; xii. 23; xiii. 1. Eccl. iii. 1. <sup>5</sup> Luke v. 5, 6.

control or direct him in his power of working miracles. Most of the ancients supposed this to be the intention of Jesus. The words sound to us harsh, but they might have been spoken in a tender manner, and not have been intended as a reproof. It is clear that he did not intend to refuse to provide wine, but only to delay it a little; and the design was, therefore, to compose the anxiety of Mary, and to prevent her being solicitous about it. It may, then, be thus expressed: "My mother, be not anxious. To you and to me this should not be a matter of solicitude. The proper time for my interfering has not yet come. When that is come, I will furnish a supply. And in the mean time, neither you nor I should be solicitous." Thus understood, it is so far from being a harsh reproof, that it was a mild exhortation for her to dismiss her fears, and to put proper trust in him. ¶ *Nine hour, &c.* My time. The proper time for my interposing. Perhaps the wine was not yet entirely exhausted. The wine had begun to fail, but he would not work a miracle until it was entirely gone, that the miracle might be free from all possibility of suspicion. It does not mean that the proper time for his working a miracle, or entering on his public work, had not come; but that the proper time for his interposing there had not arrived.

5. *His mother saith, &c.* It is evident from this verse that his mother did not understand what he had said as a harsh reproof and repulse, but as an indication of his willingness, at the proper time, to furnish wine. In all this transaction he evinced the proper feelings of a son towards a mother.

6. *Six water-pots of stone.* Made of stone; or, as we should say, stone-ware. ¶ *After the manner.* After the usual custom. ¶ *Of the purifying.* Of the washings or ablutions of the Jews. They were placed there after the usual manner

water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews,<sup>1</sup> containing two or three firkins a-piece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out<sup>2</sup> now, and bear unto the gover-

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iii. 25. Mark. vii. 2-5. Heb. vi. 2; ix. 10-19. <sup>2</sup> Eccl. ix. 7.

of the Jews, for the various washings and minute rites of purifying themselves at their feasts. They were for the purpose of washing the hands before and after eating, Matt. xv. 2, and for the formal washing of vessels and even articles of furniture. Mark vii. 3, 4. Luke xi. 39. ¶ *Two or three firkins*. It is not quite certain what is meant here by the word *firkins*. It is probable that the measure intended is the Hebrew bath, containing about seven gallons and a half. If so, the quantity of wine was very considerable.

7. *With water*. This was done by the servants employed at the feast. It was done by them so that there might be no opportunity of saying that the disciples of Jesus had filled them with wine to produce the appearance of a miracle. In this case there could be no deception. The quantity was very considerable. The servants would know whether the wine or water had been put in these vessels. It could not be believed that they had the power or disposition to impose on others in this manner. And the way was therefore clear for the proof that Jesus had really changed what was known to be water into wine. ¶ *To the brim*. To the top. Full. So that no wine could be poured in to give the appearance of a mixture. Further, vessels were used for this miracle in which wine had not been kept. These pots were never used to put wine in, but simply to keep water in for the various purposes of ablution. A large number was used on this occasion, because there were many guests.

8. *Draw out now*. This command was given to the servants. It showed that the miracle had been immediately wrought. As soon as the pots were filled, the servants were directed to take to the governor of

nor<sup>3</sup> of the feast. And they bare it.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the<sup>4</sup> servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 And saith unto him, Every

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xiii. 7. <sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 17. Psa. cxix. 100.

the feast. Jesus made no parade about it, and it does not even appear that he approached the water-pots. He willed it, and it was done. This was a clear exertion of his divine power, and made in such a manner as to leave no doubt of its reality. ¶ *The governor*. One who presided on the occasion. The one who stood at the head, or upper end of the table. He had the charge of the entertainment, provided the food, gave directions to the servants, &c.

9. *And knew not whence it was*. This is said probably to indicate that his judgment was not biassed by any favour, or want of favour towards Jesus. Had he known what was done, he would have been less likely to judge with impartiality. As it is, we have his testimony that this was real wine, and of so fine a body and flavour as to surpass that which had been provided for the occasion. Every thing in this miracle shows that there was no collusion, or understanding between Jesus and any of the persons at the feast.

10. *Every man*. It is customary, or it is generally done. ¶ *When men have well drunk*. This word does not of necessity mean that they were intoxicated, though it is usually employed in that sense. It may mean when they have drunk sufficient, or to satiety; or so much as to produce hilarity, and to destroy the keenness of their taste, so that they could not readily distinguish the good from that which was worse. But this cannot be adduced in favour of drunkenness, even if it means to be intoxicated. For 1. It is not said of those who were present at that feast, but of what generally occurred. For any thing that appears at that feast, all were perfectly temperate and sober. 2. It is not the saying of

man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk,<sup>1</sup> then that which is

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xliii. 24. Cant. v. 1.

worse: *but thou hast kept the good wine<sup>2</sup> until now.*

<sup>2</sup> Psa. civ. 15. Prov. ix. 1—8.

Jesus that is here recorded, but of the governor of the feast, who is declaring what usually occurred as a fact. 3. There is not any expression of opinion of its propriety even by that governor. 4. It does not appear that our Saviour even heard the observation. 5. Still less is there any evidence that he approved such a state of things, or that he designed that it should take place here. Further, the word translated *well drunk* cannot be shown to mean intoxication. But it may mean when they had drunk as much as they judged proper, or as they desired, then the other was presented. It is clear that neither our Saviour, nor the sacred writer, nor the speaker here, expresses any approbation of intemperance, nor is there the least evidence that any thing of the kind occurred here. It is not proof that we approve of intemperance, when we mention, as this man did, what occurs usually among men at feasts. ¶ *Is worse.* Is of an inferior quality. ¶ *The good wine.* This shows that this had all the qualities of real wine. We should not be deceived by the phrase, *good wine*. We use the phrase to denote that it is good in proportion to its strength, and its power to intoxicate. But no such sense is to be attached to the word here. Pliny, Plutarch, and Horace describe wine as good, or mention that as the best wine which was harmless, or innocent—*poculo vini innocentis*. The most useful wine—*utilissimum vinum*—was that which had little strength; and the most wholesome wine—*saluberrimum vinum*—was that which had not been adulterated by “the addition of any thing to the must or juice.” Pliny expressly says that a “good wine” was one that was destitute of spirit. Lib. iv. c. 13. It should not be assumed, therefore, that the *good wine* was stronger than the other. It is rather to be presumed that it was milder. That would be the best wine certainly. The wine referred to here was doubtless such as was commonly drunk in Palestine. That was the pure juice of the grape. It was not brandied wine, nor drugged wine, nor wine compounded of various substances

such as we drink in this land. The common wine drunk in Palestine was that which was the simple juice of the grape. We use the word wine now to denote the kind of liquid which passes under that name in this country—always fermented, and always containing a considerable portion of alcohol—not only the alcohol produced by fermentation, but alcohol added to keep it or make the wine stronger. But we have no right to take that sense of the word, and go with it to the interpretation of the scriptures. We should endeavour to get into the exact circumstances of those times; ascertain precisely what idea the word would convey to those who used it then; and apply that sense to the word in the interpretation of the Bible. And there is not the slightest evidence that the word so used would have conveyed any idea but that of the pure juice of the grape; nor the slightest circumstance mentioned in this account that would not be fully met by such a supposition. No man should adduce this instance in favour of drinking wine, unless he can prove that the wine made in the “water-pots” of Cana was just like the wine which he proposes to drink. The Saviour’s example may be always pleaded just as it was, but it is a matter of obvious and simple justice that we should find out exactly what the example was before we plead it. There is, moreover, no evidence that any other part of the water was converted into wine than that which was drawn out of the water-casks for the use of the guests. On this supposition, certainly, all the circumstances of the case are met, and the miracle would be more striking. All that was needed was to furnish a supply when the wine that had been prepared was nearly exhausted. The object was not to furnish a large quantity for future use. The miracle too would be more apparent and impressive. On this supposition, the casks would appear to be filled with water only; as it was drawn out, it was pure wine. Who could doubt then that there was the exertion of miraculous power? All, therefore, that has been said about the Redeemer’s furnishing

11 This beginning of miracles  
lial Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and

manifested<sup>1</sup> forth his glory; and  
his disciples believed<sup>2</sup> on him.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 14. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 15; xx. 30, 31. 1 John v. 13.

large quantity of wine for the newly-married pair, about his benevolence in doing so, &c., is wholly gratuitous. There is no evidence of it whatever; and it is not necessary to suppose it in order to an explanation of the circumstances of the case.

11. *This beginning of miracles.* This is first public miracle. This is declared by the sacred writer to be a *miracle*; that is, an exertion of divine power, producing a change of the substance of water into wine, which no human power could do. [ *Manifested forth.* Showed. Exhibited. ¶ *His glory.* His power, and proper character as the Messiah; showed that he had divine power; and that God had certainly commissioned him. This is shown to be a real miracle, by the following considerations. 1. Real water was placed in the vessels. This the servants believed, and there was no possibility of deception. 2. The water was placed where it was not customary to keep wine. It could not be pretended that it was merely a mixture of water and wine. It was judged to be wine without knowing whence it came. There was no agreement between Jesus and the governor of the feast, to impose on the guests. 4. It was a change which nothing but a divine power could effect. He that can change water into a substance like the juice of the grape, must be clothed with divine power. ¶ *Believed on him.* This does not mean that they did not before believe in him, but thus their faith was confirmed and strengthened. They saw a miracle; and it satisfied them that he was the Messiah. Before, they believed on the testimony of John and from conversation with Jesus. Ch. i. 35—51. Now, they saw that he was invested with almighty power, and their faith was established.

From this narrative we may learn, 1. That marriage is honourable, and that Jesus, if sought, will not refuse his presence and blessing on such an occasion. 2. In such an occasion, the presence and approbation of Christ should be sought. No compact formed on earth is more important. None enters so deeply into our comfort here. Perhaps none will so

much affect our destiny in the world to come. It should be entered into then in the fear of God. 3. On all such occasions, and on all others, our conduct should be such as that the presence of Jesus would be no interruption, or disturbance. He is holy. He is always present in every place. And on all festival occasions, our deportment should be such as that we should welcome the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is not a proper state of feeling or employment which would be interrupted by the presence of the Saviour. 4. Jesus delighted to do good. In the very beginning of his ministry he worked a miracle to show his benevolence. This was the appropriate commencement of a life in which he was to go about doing good. He seized every opportunity of doing it; and at a marriage feast, as well as among the sick and poor, he showed the character which he always sustained, that of a benefactor of mankind. An argument cannot be drawn from this instance in favour of intemperate drinking. There is no evidence that any who were present on that occasion drank too freely. Nor can an argument be drawn from this case in favour even of drinking wine such as we have. The common wine of Judea was the pure juice of the grape, without any mixture of alcohol, and was harmless. It was the common drink of the people, and did not tend to produce intoxication. Our wines are a mixture of the juice of the grape, and of brandy, and often of infusion of various substances to give it colour and taste, and the appearance of wine. Those wines are little less injurious than brandy; and the habit of drinking them should be classed with the drinking of all other liquid fires.

The following table will show the danger of drinking the wines that are in common use:

Brandy has fifty-three parts and	
39 hundredths of alcohol in a	
hundred, or.....	53.39 per cent.
Rum.....	53.68 "
Whisky, Scotch.....	54.32 "
Holland gin.....	51.60 "
Port wine, highest kind.....	25.83 "
" lowest.....	21.40 "

12 ¶ After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

13 ¶ And the Jews' passover<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 14.

Madeira, highest kind .....	29-43 per cent.
" lowest.....	19-34 "
Lisbon.....	18-34 "
Malaga.....	17-26 "
Red champagne.....	11-30 "
White do.....	12-60 "
Current wine.....	20-25 "

It follows that a man who drinks two glasses of most of the wines used has taken as much alcohol as if he had taken one glass of brandy, or whisky, and why should he not as well drink the alcohol in the brandy as in the wine? What difference can it make in morals? What difference in its effects on his system? The experience of the world has shown that water, pure water, is the most wholesome, and safe, and invigorating drink for man.

12. *To Capernaum.* Note, Matt. iv.

13. ¶ *Not many days.* The reason why he remained there no longer was that the passover was near, and they went up to Jerusalem to attend it.

13. *The Jews' passover.* The feast among the Jews called the passover. See Note, Matt. xxvi. 2—17. ¶ *And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* Every male among the Jews was required to appear at this feast. Jesus, in obedience to the law, went up to observe the feast. This is the first passover on which our Saviour attended, after he entered on the work of the ministry. It is commonly supposed that he observed three others: one alluded to, Luke vi. 1, another, John vi. 4, and the last one that when he was crucified, John xi. 55. As his baptism when he entered on his ministry had taken place some time before this, probably not far from six months, it follows that the period of his ministry was not far from three years and a half, agreeably to the prophecy in Dan. ix. 27.

14. *Found in the temple, &c.* The transaction here recorded is in almost all respects similar to that which has been explained in Matt. xxi. 12. This took place at the commencement of his public

was at hand, and Jesus<sup>2</sup> went up to Jerusalem.

14 And found<sup>3</sup> in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 23; ch. v. 1; vi. 4; xi. 55. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxi. 12, 13. Mark xi. 15—17. Luke xix. 45, 46.

ministry, and that at the close. Thus he showed that his great regard was for the pure worship of his Father: and one great design of his coming was to reform the abuses which had crept into that worship, and to bring man to a proper regard for the glory of God. If it be asked how it was that those engaged in this traffic so readily yielded to Jesus of Nazareth, and that they left their gains, and property, and fled from the temple, at the command of one so obscure as he was; it may be replied, 1. That their consciences reproved them for their impiety, and they could not set up the appearance of self-defence. 2. It was customary in the nation to cherish a profound regard for the authority of a prophet; and the appearance and manner of Jesus, so fearless, so decided, so authoritative, led them to suppose he was a prophet, and they feared to resist him. 3. He had even then a reputation among the people, and it is not improbable that many supposed him to be the Messiah. 4. Jesus on all occasions had a most wonderful control over men. None could resist him. There was something in his manner, as well as in his doctrine, that awed men, and made them tremble at his presence. On this occasion he had the manner of a prophet, the authority of God, and the testimony of their own consciences, and they could not, therefore, resist the authority by which he spoke.

Though Jesus thus purified the temple at the commencement of his ministry, yet in three years the same scene was to be repeated. See Matt. xxi. 12. And from this we may learn, 1. How some men forget the most solemn reproofs, and return to evil practices. 2. That no sacredness of time nor place will guard them from sin. In the very temple, under the very eye of God, they returned to practices for which their consciences reproved them, and which they knew God disapproved. 3. We see here how

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house<sup>1</sup> an house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remem-

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 49. Isa. lvi. 5—11. Jer. vii. 11. Hos. xii. 7, 8. Matt. xxi. 13. Acts xix. 24—27.

strong is the love of gain, the ruling passion of mankind. Not even the sacredness of the temple, the presence of God, the awful ceremonials of religion, deterred them from this unholy traffic. So wicked men and hypocrites will always turn religion, if possible, into gain; and not even the sanctuary, the sabbath, or the most awful and sacred scenes will deter them from schemes of gain. So strong is this grovelling love of gain, and so deep is that depravity which fears not God, and regards not his sabbaths, his sanctuary, or his law.

15. *A scourge.* A whip. ¶ *Of small cords.* This whip was made as an emblem of authority, and also for the purpose of driving from the temple the cattle which had been brought there for sale. There is no evidence that he used any violence to any of the men engaged in that unhallowed traffic. The original word implies that these cords were made of twisted rushes or reeds, probably the ancient material for making ropes.

17. *It was written, &c.* This is recorded in Psa. lxi. 9. Its meaning is that he was affected with great zeal or concern for the pure worship of God. ¶ *The zeal of thine house.* Zeal is intense ardour in reference to any object. *The zeal of thy house* means extraordinary concern for the temple of God; intense solicitude that the worship there should be pure, and such as God would approve. ¶ *Hath eaten me up.* Hath absorbed me, or engaged my entire attention and affection; hath surpassed all other feelings, so that it may be said to be the one great absorbing affection and desire of the mind. Here is an example set for ministers, and

bered that it was written,<sup>2</sup> The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

18 ¶ Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What<sup>3</sup> sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy<sup>4</sup> this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxi. 9; cxli. 139. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vi. 30. Matt. xii. 38, 40. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvi. 61; xxvii. 40.

for all Christians. In Jesus, this was the great commanding sentiment of his life. In us it should be also. In this he began and ended his ministry. In this we should begin and end our lives. We learn also that ministers of religion should aim to purify the church of God. Wicked men, conscience-smitten, will tremble when they see proper zeal in the ministers of Jesus Christ; and there is no combination of wicked men, and no form of depravity that can stand before the faithful, zealous, pure preaching of the gospel. The preaching of every minister should be such that wicked men will feel that they must either become Christians, or leave the house of God, or spend their lives there in the consciousness of guilt, and the fear of hell.

18. *What sign, &c.* What miracle dost thou work? He assumed the character of a prophet. He was reforming, by his authority, the temple. It was natural to ask by what authority this was done; and as they had been accustomed to miracles in the life of Moses and Elijah and the other prophets, so they demanded evidence that Jesus had authority thus to cleanse the house of God. ¶ *Seeing that thou doest.* Rather, by what title or authority thou doest these things? Our translation is ambiguous. They wished to know by what miracle he had shown, or could show, his right to do those things.

19. *Destroy this temple.* The evangelist informs us, ver. 21, that by *temple* here, he meant his body. It is not improbable that he pointed with his finger to his body as he spoke. The word *destroy*, used here in the imperative, has rather the force of the future. Its mean-

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in

building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

ing may thus be expressed: You are now profaners of the temple of God. You have defiled the sanctuary; you have made it a place of traffic. You have also despised my authority, and been unmoved by the miracles which I have already wrought. But your wickedness will not end here. You will oppose me more and more; you will reject and despise me until in your wickedness you will take my life, and destroy my body. Here was therefore a distinct prediction both of his death, and the cause of it. The word *temple*, or *dwelling*, was not unfrequently used by the Jews to denote the body as being the residence of the spirit. 2 Cor. v. 1. Christians are not unfrequently called the temple of God, as being those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells on earth. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Our Saviour called his body a temple in accordance with the common use of language, and more particularly because in him the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily. Col. ii. 9. The temple at Jerusalem was the appropriate dwelling place of God. His visible presence was there peculiarly manifested. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15. Psa. lxxvi. 2. As the Lord Jesus was divine; as the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him; so his body might be called a temple. ¶ *In three days I will raise it up.* The Jews had asked a miracle of him in proof of his authority, that is, a proof that he was the Messiah. He tells them that a full and decided proof of that would be his resurrection from the dead. Though they would not be satisfied by any other miracle, yet by this, they ought to be convinced that he came from heaven, and was the long-expected Messiah. To the same evidence that he was the Christ, he refers them on other occasions. See Matt. xii. 38, 39. Thus early did Christ foretell his death and resurrection, and at the beginning of the work had a clear foresight of all that was to take place. This knowledge shows clearly that he came from heaven; and it evinces also the extent of his love, that he was willing to come to save us, knowing clearly what it would cost him. Had he come without such an expectation of suffering, his love might have been far less; but when he

fully knew all that was before him; when he saw that it would involve him in contempt and death, it shows a compassion worthy of a God, that he was willing to endure the load of all our sorrows, and die to save us from death everlasting. When Jesus says "I will raise it up," it is proof also of divine power. A mere man could not say this. No deceased man can have such power over his body; and there must have been therefore in the person of Jesus a nature superior to human, to which the term "I" could be applied; and which had power to raise the dead, that is, which was divine.

20. Then said the Jews, &c. The Jews, either from the ambiguity of his language, or more probably from a design to cavil, understood him as speaking of the temple at Jerusalem. What he said here is all the evidence that they could adduce on his trial, Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark xiv. 58, and they reproached him with it when on the cross. Matt. xxvii. 40. The Jews frequently perverted our Saviour's meaning. The language which he used was often that of parables, or metaphor; and as they sought to misunderstand him, and pervert his language, so he often left them to their own delusions, as he himself says: "that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." Luke viii. 10. This was a case which they might, if they chose, easily misunderstand. They were in the temple. The conversation was about the temple, and though he probably pointed to his body, or designated it in some plain way, yet they chose to understand him as referring to the temple itself. And as it appeared so improbable that he could raise up that in three days, they wished to pervert his words, and pour ridicule on his pretensions. ¶ *Forty and six years, &c.* The temple in which they then were, was that which was commonly called the second temple, built after the return of the Jews from Babylon. See Note, Matt. xxi. 12. This temple Herod the Great commenced repairing, or rebuilding, in the eighteenth year of his reign, that is, sixteen years before the birth of Christ. Jos. Ant. lib. xv. § 1. The main body of the temple he completed in nine years and a half. Jos. Ant. lib. xv.

21 But he spake of the<sup>1</sup> temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered<sup>2</sup> that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 14, 17. Eph. ii. 21, 22. Col. i. 19; ii. 2.  
<sup>2</sup> Ch. xii. 16. Luke xxiv. 8. Acts xi. 16.

§ 5, 6. Yet the temple, with its out-buildings, was not entirely complete in the time of our Saviour. Herod continued to ornament it, and to perfect it even till the time of Agrippa. Jos. Ant. lib. xx. c. viii. § 11. As Herod began to rebuild the temple sixteen years before the birth of Jesus, and as this happened in the thirtieth year of his age, so the time which had been occupied in it was forty-six years. This circumstance is one of the many in the New Testament which shew the accuracy of the evangelists, and which prove that they were well acquainted with what they recorded. It shows that their narration is true. Impostors do not trouble themselves to be very accurate about names and dates. And there is nothing in which they are more liable to make mistakes. ¶ *Wilt thou, &c.* This is an expression of contempt. Herod, with all his wealth and power, had been engaged in this work almost half a century. Can you, an obscure and unknown Galilean, accomplish this in three days? The thing in their judgment was ridiculous, and showed, as they supposed, that he had no authority to do what he had done in the temple.

22. *When he was risen from the dead, &c.* This saying of our Saviour at that time seemed obscure and difficult. The disciples did not understand it. But they treasured it up in their memory, and the event showed what was its true meaning. Many prophecies are obscure when spoken, which are perfectly plain when the event takes place. We learn from this also the importance of treasuring up the truths of the bible now, though we may not perfectly understand them. Hereafter they may be plain to us. It is therefore important that children should learn the truths of the sacred scriptures. Treasured

23 ¶ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he<sup>3</sup> knew all men,

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 30. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; xxix. 17. Jer. xvii. 10. Matt. ix. 4. Acts i. 24. Rev. ii. 23.

up in their memory they may not be understood now, but hereafter those truths may be clear to them. Every one engaged in teaching a Sunday school, therefore, may be imparting instruction which may be understood, and may impart comfort long after the teacher is gone to eternity. ¶ *They believed.* That is, after he rose from the dead. ¶ *The scripture.* The Old Testament, which predicted his resurrection. Reference here must be made to Psa. xvi. 10. Compare Psa. ii. 7. Acts ii. 27—32; xiii. 35—37. Compare Acts xiii. 33. They understood those scriptures in a sense different from what they did before. ¶ *The word which Jesus had said.* The prediction which Jesus had made respecting his resurrection in this place and on other occasions. See Matt. xx. 19. Luke xviii. 32, 33.

23. *Feast day. Feast.* During the celebration of the passover, which continued eight days. ¶ *Miracles which he did.* These miracles are not particularly recorded. Jesus took occasion to work miracles and to preach at that time, for a great multitude were present from all parts of Judea. It was a favourable opportunity for making known his doctrines, and showing the evidence that he was the Christ, and he embraced it. We should always seek and embrace opportunities of doing good, and we should not be deterred, but rather excited by the multitude around us, to make known our real sentiments on the subject of religion.

24. *Did not commit himself.* The word translated *commit* here is the same as in ver. 23 is translated *believed*. It means to put trust or confidence in. Jesus did not put trust or reliance on them. He did not leave himself in their hands. He acted cautiously and prudently. The proper time for him to die had not come,



25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

## CHAPTER III.

*The conversation with Nicodemus, 1—21.  
John baptizing, and teaching respecting Christ, 22—36.*

and he secured his own safety. The reason why he did not commit himself to them is, that *he knew all men*. He knew the inconstancy and fickleness of the multitude. He knew how easily they might be turned against him by the Jewish leaders, and how unsafe he would be if they should be moved to sedition and tumult.

25. *Should testify of man.* Should give him the character of any man. ¶ *He knew what was in man.* This he did because he had made all, ch. i. 3, and because he was God, ch. i. 1. There can be no higher evidence than this that he was omniscient, and was therefore divine. To search the heart is the prerogative of God alone. Jer. xvii. 10. And as Jesus knew what was in these disciples, and as it is expressly said that he knew what was in man, that is, in all men, so it follows that he must be equal with God. As he knows all, he is acquainted with the false pretensions and professions of hypocrites. None can deceive him. He also knows the wants and desires of all his real friends. He hears their groans, he sees their sighs, he counts their tears, and in the day of need will come to their relief.

## CHAPTER III.

1. *A man of the Pharisees.* A Pharisee. See Note, Matt. iii. 7. ¶ *Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.* One of the sanhedrim, or great council of the nation. He is twice mentioned after this as being friendly to our Saviour; in the first instance, as advocating his cause, and defending him against the unjust suspicion of the Jews, ch. vii. 50; and in the second instance as one who came to aid in embalming his body, ch. xix. 39. It will be recollected that the design of John in writing this gospel was to show that Jesus was the Messiah. To do this, he here adduces the testimony of one of the rulers of the Jews who early became convinced

**T**HERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi,

1 Ch. vii. 50, 51; xii. 42, 43; xix. 39.

of it, and who retained the belief of it until the death of Jesus.

2. *The same came to Jesus.* The design of his coming seems to have been to inquire more fully of Jesus what was the doctrine which he came to teach. He seems to have been convinced that he was the Messiah, and desired to be further instructed in private respecting his doctrine. It was not usual for a man of rank, power, and riches, to come to inquire of Jesus in this manner. Yet we may learn that the most favourable opportunity for teaching such men the nature of personal religion is when they are alone. Scarcely any man, of any rank, will refuse to converse on this subject when addressed respectfully and tenderly in private. In the midst of their companions, or engaged in business, they may refuse to listen, or may cavil. When alone, they will hear the voice of entreaty and persuasion, and be willing to converse on the great subjects of judgment and eternity. Thus Paul says, Gal. ii. 2, "privately to them which are of reputation;" evincing his consummate prudence, and his profound knowledge of human nature. ¶ *By night.* It is not mentioned why he came by night. It might have been, being a member of the sanhedrim, he was engaged all the day. Or it may have been because the Lord Jesus was occupied all the day in teaching publicly and in working miracles, and there was no opportunity for conversing with him as freely as he desired. Or it may have been that he was afraid of the ridicule and contempt of those in power, and fearful that his coming might involve him in danger if publicly known. Or it may have been that he was afraid that, if it were publicly known that he was disposed to favour Jesus, it might provoke more opposition against him, and endanger his life. As no bad motive is imputed to him, it is most in accordance with Christian charity to suppose that his motives were such as God would approve, especially as our Saviour did not reprove

we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for <sup>1</sup> no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 36; vii. 31; ix. 16, 30—33; xi. 47, 48; xii. 37. Acts ii. 22; iv. 16, 17; x. 38.

him. We should not be disposed to blame men where Jesus did not, and we should desire to find goodness in every man rather than be ever on the search for evil motives. See 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7. We may learn here, 1. That our Saviour, though engaged during the day, did not refuse to converse with an inquiring sinner at night. Ministers of the gospel at all times should welcome those who are asking the way to life. 2. That it is proper for men, even those of elevated rank, to inquire on the subject of religion. Nothing is so important, and no temper of mind is more lovely than a disposition to ask the way to heaven. At all times they should seek, and especially in times of great religious excitement, they should make inquiry. This was a time of great solicitude at Jerusalem. Many believed on Jesus. He wrought miracles, and preached, and many were converted. There was what would now be called a revival of religion, having all the features of a work of grace. At such a season it was proper then, as it is now, that not only the poor, but the rich and great, should inquire the path to life. And from the conversation of Nicodemus it is manifest that the inquiry had become general, whether Jesus was not the Messiah. ¶ *Rabbi*. This was a title of respect conferred on distinguished Jewish teachers, somewhat in the way that the title doctor of divinity is now conferred. Our Saviour forbade his disciples to wear that title, though it was proper for him to have it, as being the great Teacher of mankind. It literally signifies great, and was given by Nicodemus doubtless because Jesus gave distinguished proofs that he came as a teacher from God. ¶ *We know*. I know, and those with whom I am connected. Perhaps he was acquainted with some of the Pharisees who entertained the same opinion about Jesus that he did, and he came to be more fully confirmed in the belief. ¶ *Come from God*. Sent by God. This

him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, <sup>2</sup> Except a man be born <sup>3</sup> again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 13. Gal. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 1. Tit. iii. 5. Jas. i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 23. 1 John ii. 29; iii. 9. <sup>3</sup> Or, *from above*. <sup>4</sup> Ch. i. 8; xii. 28. Jer. v. 21.

implies his readiness to hear him, and his desire to be instructed. He acknowledges the divine mission of Jesus, and delicately asks him to instruct him in the truths of religion. When we read the words of Jesus in the Bible, it should be with a belief that he came from God, and was therefore qualified and authorized to teach us the way of life. ¶ *These miracles*. The miracles which he wrought in the temple and at Jerusalem, ch. ii. 23. ¶ *Except God be with him*. Except God aid him, and except his instructions are approved by God. Miracles show that a prophet or religious teacher comes from God, because God would not work a miracle in attestation of a falsehood, or to encourage a false teacher. If God gives a man power to work a miracle, it is proof that he approves the teaching of that man, and the miracle is the proof or the credential that he came from God.

3. *Verily, verily*. Expressions of strong affirmation, denoting the certainty and the importance of what he was about to say. Jesus proceeds to state to him one of the fundamental and indispensable doctrines of his religion. It may seem remarkable that he should introduce this subject in this manner. But it should be remembered that Nicodemus acknowledged that he was a teacher come from God; that he implied by that his readiness and desire to receive instruction; and that it is not wonderful, therefore, that Jesus should commence with one of the fundamental truths of his religion. It is no part of Christianity to conceal any thing. Jesus declared to every man, high or low, rich or poor, the most humbling truths of the gospel. Nothing was kept back for fear of offending men of wealth or power; and for them, as well as the most poor and lowly, it was declared to be indispensable to experience a change of heart and of life. ¶ *Except a man*. This is a universal form of expression designed to include all mankind. Of every man it is

flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born<sup>1</sup> again.

8 The wind bloweth where it

<sup>1</sup> Or, from above.

could be born when he was old. Jesus tells him that if this could be, it would not answer any valuable purpose. He would be still possessed of the same propensities and passions. Another change was, therefore, indispensable. ¶ *Is flesh.* Partakes of the nature of the parent. Compare Gen. v. 3. As the parents are corrupt and sinful, so will be their descendants. See Job xiv. 4. And as the parents are wholly corrupt by nature, so their children will be the same. The word *flesh* here is used to denote corrupt, defiled, sinful. *Flesh* in the scriptures is often used to denote the sinful propensities and passions of our nature, as those propensities are supposed to have their seat in the animal nature. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness," &c. Gal. v. 19, 20. See also Rom. viii. 5. Eph. ii. 3. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 18. 1 John ii. 16. ¶ *Is born of the Spirit.* Of the Spirit of God, or by the agency of the Holy Ghost. ¶ *Is spirit.* Is spiritual, like the spirit, that is, holy, pure. Here we learn: 1. That all men are by nature sinful. 2. That none are renewed but by the Spirit of God. If man did the work himself it would be still flesh, and impure. 3. That the effect of the new birth is to make men holy. And, 4. That no man can have evidence that he is born again who is not holy, and just in proportion as he becomes pure in his life will be the evidence that he is born of the Spirit.

7. *Marvel not.* Wonder not. It is possible that Nicodemus in some way still expressed a doubt of the doctrine, and Jesus took occasion in a very striking manner to illustrate it.

8. *The wind bloweth, &c.* Nicodemus had objected to the doctrine because he did not understand how it could be. Jesus shows him that he ought not to reject it on that account, for he constantly believed things quite as difficult. It might appear incomprehensible, but it was to be

listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is<sup>2</sup> every one that is born of the Spirit.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 12. Isa. lv. 6—11. Mark iv. 26—28. 1 Cor. ii. 11.

judged of by its effects. As in this case of the wind, the effects were seen, the sound was heard, important changes were produced by it, trees and clouds were moved, yet the wind is not seen, nor do we know whence it comes, nor by what laws it is governed. So it is with the operations of the Spirit. We see the changes produced. Men who were sinful become holy; the thoughtless become serious; the licentious become pure; the vicious, moral; the moral, religious; the prayerless, prayerful; the rebellious and obstinate, meek, and mild, and gentle. When we see such changes, we ought no more to doubt that they are produced by some cause, by some mighty agent, than when we see the trees moved, or the waters of the ocean piled on heaps or feel the cooling effects of a summer's breeze. In those cases we attribute it to the wind, though we see it not, and though we do not understand its operations. We may learn hence: 1. That the proper evidence of conversion is the effect on the life. 2. That we are not too curiously to search for the cause or manner of the change. 3. That God has power over the most hardened sinner to change him, as he has power over the loftiest oak to bring it down by a sweeping blast. 4. That there may be a great variety in the modes of the operation of the Spirit. As the wind sometimes sweeps with a tempest, and prostrates all before it, and sometimes breathes upon us in a mild evening zephyr, so it is with the operations of the Spirit. The sinner sometimes trembles and is prostrate before the truth, and sometimes is sweetly and gently drawn to the cross of Jesus. ¶ *Where it listeth.* Where it will please. ¶ *So is every one, &c.* Every one that is born of the Spirit is, in some respects, like the wind. You see it not, you cannot discern its laws, but you see its effects, and you know, therefore, that it does exist and operate. Nicodemus' objection was, that he could not

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him,<sup>1</sup> How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xlii. 16; Mark viii. 24, 25.

see this change, or perceive how it could be. Jesus tells him that he should not reject every doctrine which he could not understand. Neither could the wind be seen, but its effects were well known, and no one doubted the existence of the power of the agent. Compare Eccl. xi. 5.

9. *How can these things be?* Nicodemus was still unwilling to admit the doctrine unless he understood it. And we have here an instance of a man of rank stumbling at one of the plainest doctrines of religion, and unwilling to admit a truth because he could not understand how it could be, when he daily admitted the truth of facts in other things which he could as little comprehend. And we may learn: 1. That men will often admit facts on other subjects, and be greatly perplexed by similar facts in religion. 2. That no small part of men's difficulties are because they cannot understand how or why a thing is. 3. That men of rank and office are as likely to be perplexed by these things as those in the obscurest and humblest walks of life. 4. That this is one reason why they so often reject the truths of the gospel. And, 5. That this is a very unwise treatment of truth, and a way which men do not apply to other things. If the wind cools and refreshes me in summer, it matters little how it is. If it prostrates the oak, or lashes the sea into foam; if it destroys my house or my grain, it matters little how it is done. And so of the Spirit. If he renews my heart, humbles my pride, subdues my sin, and comforts my soul, it is a matter of little importance how he does all this. Sufficient for us is it to know that it is done, and to taste the blessings which flow from the renewing and sanctifying grace of God.

10. *A master of Israel.* A teacher of Israel: the same word that in the second verse is translated teacher. As such a teacher, he ought to have understood this doctrine. It was not new, but was clearly taught in the Old Testament. See particularly Psa. li. 10, 16, 17. Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26. It may seem surprising that a man whose business it was to teach

him,<sup>2</sup> Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto

<sup>2</sup> Isa. ix. 16; xxix. 10—12. Matt. xi. 25.

the people should be a stranger to so plain and important a doctrine. But when worldly-minded men are placed in offices of religion, when they seek those offices for the sake of ease or reputation, it is no wonder that they are strangers to the plain truths of the Bible. And there have been, and there still are, many, who are in the ministry, to whom the plainest doctrines of the gospel are obscure. No man can understand the Bible fully unless he is an humble Christian, and the easiest way to comprehend the truths of religion is to give the heart to God, and live to his glory. A child thus may have more real knowledge of the way of salvation than many who are pretended masters and teachers of Israel. Ch. vii. 17. Psa. viii. 2. Matt. xi. 25, compared with Matt. xxi. 16. ¶ *Of Israel.* Of the Jews; of the Jewish nation.

11. *We speak.* Jesus here speaks in the plural number, including himself and those engaged with him in preaching the gospel. Nicodemus had said, ver. 2, "we know," &c. including himself and those with whom he acted. Jesus in reply said, we who are engaged in spreading the new doctrines about which you have come to inquire, speak what we know. We do not deliver doctrines which we do not practically understand. This is a positive affirmation of Jesus, which he had a right to make, about his new doctrine. He knew its truth; and those who came into his kingdom knew it also. We learn here: 1. That the Pharisees taught doctrines which they did not practically understand. They taught much truth, Matt. xxiii. 2, but they were deplorably ignorant of the plainest matters in their practical application. 2. Every minister of the gospel ought to be able to appeal to his own experience, and say that he knows the truth which he is communicating to others. 3. Every Sunday school teacher should be able to say, "I know what I am communicating; I have experienced what is meant by the new birth, and the love of God, and the religion which I am teaching." ¶ *Testify.* Bear witness to. ¶ *That we have seen.* Jesus

thee,<sup>1</sup> We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 32; ch. i. 18; vii. 16. Isa. lv. 4. Matt. xi. 27. Luke x. 22. 1 John i. 1-3; v. 6-12. Rev. i. 5; iii. 14.

had seen by his omniscient eye all the operations of the Spirit on the heart. His ministers have seen its effects as we see the effects of the wind, and having seen men changed from sin to holiness, they are qualified to bear witness to the truth and reality of the change. And every successful minister of the gospel thus becomes a witness of the saving power of the gospel. ¶ *Ye receive not.* Ye Pharisees. Though we give evidence of truth, though miracles are wrought, and proof is given that this doctrine came from heaven, yet you reject it. ¶ *Our witness.* Our testimony. The evidence which is furnished by miracle, and the saving power of the gospel. Men reject revelation, though it is attested by the strongest evidence, and though it is constantly producing changes in the hearts and lives of men.

12. *If I have told you.* Things which occur on earth. Not sensual or worldly things, for Jesus had said nothing of these. But he had told him of operations of the Spirit which had occurred on earth, whose effects were visible, and which might be, therefore, believed. These were the plainest and most obvious of the doctrines of religion. ¶ *How shall ye believe?* How will you believe? Is there any probability that you will understand them? ¶ *Heavenly things.* Things pertaining to the government of God, and his doings in the heavens, which are removed from human view, and which cannot be subjected to human sight. The more profound and inscrutable things pertaining to the redemption of men. Learn hence, 1. The height and depth of the doctrines of religion. There is much that we cannot yet understand. 2. The obscurity of our minds; the feebleness of our understandings; the corruption of our hearts, that the plainest doctrines of religion are so little understood by us. 3. There is before us a vast immensity; there are profound wonders of God's government, to be the study of the righteous, and to be seen and admired for ever and ever.

things,<sup>2</sup> and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?<sup>3</sup>

13 And<sup>4</sup> no man hath ascended

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 3, 5, 8. 1 Cor. iiii. 1, 2. Heb. v. 11. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 13-17, 31-36. 1 Tim. iiii. 16. <sup>4</sup> Ch. i. 18; vi. 46. Prov. xxx. 4. Acts ii. 33, 34. Eph. iv. 8, 10.

13. *And no man hath ascended into heaven.* No man, therefore, is qualified to speak of heavenly things. Ver. 12. To speak of those things requires intimacy with them, demands that we have seen them; and as no one hath ascended into heaven and returned, so no one is qualified to speak of them but He who came down from heaven. This does not mean that no one had gone to heaven, or been saved, for Enoch and Elijah had been carried thither, Gen. v. 24; Compare 2 Kin. ii. 11; Heb. xi. 5; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and others, were there. But it means that no one had ascended and returned, so as to be qualified to speak of the things there. ¶ *But he that came down, &c.* The Lord Jesus. He is represented as coming down, because, being equal with God, he took upon himself our nature. Ch. i. 14. Phil. ii. 6, 7. He is represented as sent by the Father. Ch. iii. 17, 34. Gal. iv. 4. 1 John iv. 9, 10. ¶ *The Son of man.* Called thus from his being a man; from his interest in man; and as expressive of his regard for man. It is a favourite title which the Lord Jesus gives to himself. ¶ *Which is in heaven.* This is a very remarkable expression. Jesus, the Son of man, was then bodily on earth conversing with Nicodemus. Yet he declares, that he is at the same time in heaven. This can be understood only as referring to the fact that he had two natures, that his divine nature was in heaven, and his human nature on earth. Our Saviour is frequently spoken of in this manner. Compare Ch. vi. 62; xvii. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 9. As Jesus was in heaven, as his proper abode was there, he was fitted to speak of heavenly things, and declare the will of God to man. And we may learn, 1. That the truth about the deep things of God is not to be learned of men. No one has dived into them; and no infidel, or mere man, or prophet, is qualified of himself to speak of them. 2. That all the light which we are to expect on those subjects is to be sought in the scriptures. It is only Jesus and

up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

14 ¶ And<sup>1</sup> as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,<sup>2</sup> even

<sup>1</sup> Num. xxi. 7—9.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. viii. 28; xii. 32—34.    Matt. xxvi. 54.

his inspired apostles and evangelists, that can speak of those things. 5. It is not wonderful that some things in the scriptures are mysterious. They are about things which we have not seen, and we must receive them on the testimony of him who has seen them, the Lord Jesus Christ. 4. The Lord Jesus is divine. He was in heaven while on earth. He had, therefore, a nature far above the human, and is equal with the Father. Ch. i. 1.

14. *And as Moses.* Jesus proceeds in this and the following verses to state the reason why he came into the world. And in order to this he illustrates his design, and the efficacy of his coming, by a reference to the case of the brazen serpent, recorded in Num. xxi. 8, 9. The people were bitten by flying fiery serpents. There was no cure for the bite. Moses was directed to make an image of the serpent, and place it in the sight of the people, that they might look on it and be healed. There is no evidence that this was intended to be a type of the Messiah; but it is used by Jesus as strikingly illustrating his work. Men are sinners. There is no cure by human means for the maladies of the soul. And as the people who were bitten might look on the image of the serpent, and be healed, so may sinners look to the Saviour, and be cured of all the moral maladies of our nature. ¶ *Lifted up.* Erected on a pole. Placed on high, so that it might be seen by the people. ¶ *The serpent.* The image of a serpent made of brass. ¶ *In the wilderness.* Near the land of Edom. In the desert and desolate country to the south of mount Hor. Num. xxi. 4. ¶ *Even so.* In a similar manner, and with a similar design. Jesus here refers, doubtless, to his death. Compare ch. viii. 28; xii. 32. The points of resemblance between his being lifted up, and that of the brazen serpent, seem to be these: 1. In both cases, those who are to be benefited can be aided in no other way. The bite of

so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever<sup>3</sup> believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 36; ch. vi. 40, 47. Isa. xlv. 22. Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 9—14. Heb. vii. 25.

the serpent was deadly, and could be healed only by looking on the brazen serpent; and sin is deadly in its nature, and can be removed only by looking on the cross. 2. The mode of their being lifted up. The brazen serpent was in the sight of the people. So Jesus was exalted from the earth; raised on a tree, or cross. 3. The design was similar. The one was to save the life, the other the soul. The one to save from temporal death, the other from eternal death. 4. The manner of the cure was similar. The people of Israel were to look on the serpent and be healed, and so sinners are to look on the Lord Jesus, that they may be saved. ¶ *Must.* It is proper, necessary, indispensable, if men are saved. Compare Luke xxii. 42; xxiv. 26. ¶ *The Son of man.* The Messiah.

15. *That whosoever.* This shows the fulness and freeness of the gospel. All may come and be saved. ¶ *Believeth in him.* Whosoever puts confidence in him as able and willing to save. All who feel that they are sinners; that they have no righteousness of their own, and are willing to look to him as their only Saviour. ¶ *Should not perish.* They are in danger, by nature, of perishing; that is, of sinking down to the pains of hell; or of "being punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. i. 9. All who believe on Jesus shall be saved from this condemnation, and be raised up to eternal life. And from this we learn, 1. That there is salvation in no other. 2. That salvation is here full, and free for all who will come. 3. That it is easy. What was more easy for a poor, wounded, dying Israelite, bitten by a poisonous serpent, than to look up to a brazen serpent? So with the poor, lost, dying sinner. And what more foolish, than for such a wounded, dying man to refuse to look on a remedy so easy and effectual? So, nothing is

16 ¶ For<sup>1</sup> God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For<sup>2</sup> God sent not his Son

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v. 8. <sup>2</sup> Cor. v. 19—21. Tit. iii. 4, 5. 1 John iv. 9, 10, 19. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xii. 47, 48. Luke ix. 36.

more foolish than for a lost and dying sinner to refuse to look on God's only Son, exalted on a cross, to die for the sins of men, and able to save, to the uttermost, all who come to God by him.

16. *For God so loved.* This does not mean that God approved the conduct of men, but had benevolent feelings towards them; was so earnestly desirous of their happiness. God hates wickedness, but still desires the happiness of men, sinful though they are. A parent may love his child, and desire his welfare, and yet be strongly opposed to the conduct of that child. When we approve the conduct of another, this is the love of complacency; when we desire simply their happiness, this is the love of benevolence.

¶ *The world.* All mankind. It does not mean any particular part of the world, but man as man, the race that had rebelled and that deserved to die. See ch. vi. 33; xvii. 21. His love for the world, or for all mankind, in giving his Son, was shown by these circumstances: 1. All the world was in ruin, and exposed to the wrath of God. 2. They were in a hopeless condition. 3. God gave his Son. Man had no claim on him. It was a gift, an undeserved gift. 4. He gave him up to extreme sufferings, even the bitter pains of death on the cross. 5. It was for all the world. He tasted "death for every man." Heb. ii. 9. He "died for all." 2 Cor. v. 15. "He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 2. ¶ *That he gave.* It was a free gift, unmerited. Man had no claim; and when there was no eye to pity, or arm to save, it pleased God to give his Son into the hands of men to die in their stead. Rom. viii. 32. Gal. i. 4. Luke xxii. 19. It was the mere movement of his love; the expression of his eternal compassion, and his desire that sinners should not perish for ever. ¶ *His only-begotten Son.* See Note, ch. i. 14. This is the highest expression of love of

into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 ¶ He<sup>3</sup> that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already,

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 36; Ch. v. 24; vi. 40, 47. Rom. v. 1; viii. 34. 1 John v. 12.

which we can conceive. A parent who should give up his only son to die—if this could, or might be done—would show higher love than he could manifest in any other way. So it shows the depth of the love of God, that he was willing to give his only Son into the hands of sinful men, that he might be slain, and thus redeem them from eternal sorrow.

17. *To condemn the world.* Not to judge, or pronounce sentence on mankind. God might have sent him justly for this. Man deserved condemnation, and it would have been right then to have pronounced it. But God was willing that there should be an offer of pardon, and the sentence of condemnation was delayed. Though Jesus did not come then to condemn mankind, yet the time is coming when he will return to judge the living and the dead. Matt. xxv. 31—46. Acts xvii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 10.

18. *He that believeth.* He that has confidence in him, relies on him, and trusts to his merits and promises for salvation. To believe on him, is to feel and act according to truth; that is, to go as lost sinners, and act towards him as a Saviour from sins; relying on him, and looking to him only for salvation. See Notes, Mark xvi. 16. ¶ *Is not condemned.* Because believing on him. God pardons sin, and delivers us from deserved punishment. Jesus died in our stead. He suffered for us. And by his sufferings God is satisfied; our sins are expiated; and it is consistent for him to forgive. When a sinner, therefore, believes on Jesus, he trusts in him as having died in his place, and God having accepted the offering which Christ made in our stead, as being an equivalent for our sufferings in hell, there is now no further condemnation. Rom. viii. 1. ¶ *He that believeth not.* All who do not believe, whether the gospel has come to them or not. All men by nature. ¶ *Is condemned already.*

because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light <sup>1</sup> is come into the world,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 4, 9—11; ix. 39—41; xv. 22—25. Mark xi. 20—24. Luke x. 12—16. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.

By conscience, by law, and in the judgment of God. God disapproves of those who do not believe, and this feeling of disapprobation, and the expression of it, is the condemnation. There is no condemnation so terrible as this, that God disapproves our conduct, and will express his disapprobation. He will judge according to truth, and woe to that man whose conduct God cannot approve. ¶ *Because.* This word does not imply that the ground, or reason of their condemnation is, that they have not believed, or, that they are condemned because they do not believe on him, for there are millions of sinners who have never heard of him. But the meaning is this: There is but one way by which men can be freed from condemnation. All men without the gospel are condemned. They who do not believe are still under this condemnation, not having embraced the only way by which they can be delivered from it. The verse may be thus paraphrased: All men are by nature condemned. There is but one way of being free from this state, by believing on the Son of God. They who do not believe, remain in that state, are still condemned, for they have not embraced the only way in which they can be freed from it. Nevertheless, those to whom the gospel comes, greatly heighten their guilt and condemnation by rejecting the offers of mercy, and trampling under foot the blood of the Son of God. Prov. i. 24—40. Matt. xi. 23. Luke xii. 47. Heb. x. 29. And there are thousands going to eternity under this double condemnation. 1. For positive, open sin. And, 2. For rejecting God's mercy, and despising the gospel of his Son. This it is which will make the doom of sinners in christian lands so terrible.

19. *This is the condemnation.* This is the cause of condemnation; or this is the reason why men are punished. ¶ *That light is come.* Light often denotes instruction, teaching, doctrine, as that by which we see clearly the path of duty.

and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil <sup>2</sup> hateth the light, neither

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 7. 1 Kin. xxii. 8. Psa. i. 17. Amos v. 10, 11. Luke xi. 45. Jas. i. 22—25.

All the instruction that God gives us by conscience, reason, or revelation, may thus be called light. But this word is used peculiarly to denote the Messiah, or the Christ, who is often spoken of as the light. See Isa. ix. 2; lx. 1. Compare Matt. iv. 16. Also Note on ch. i. 4. It was doubtless this light to which Jesus had particular reference here. ¶ *Men loved darkness.* Darkness is the emblem of iniquity, error, superstition: whatever is opposite to truth and piety. Men are said to love darkness more than they love light, when they are the better pleased with error than truth; with sin than holiness; with Belial than Christ. ¶ *Because their deeds are evil.* Men who commit crime commonly choose to do it in the night, so as to escape detection. So men who are wicked, prefer false doctrine and error to the truth. Thus the Pharisees cloaked their crimes under the errors of their system; and amidst their false doctrines and superstitions, they attempted to convince others that they had great zeal for God. ¶ *Deeds.* Works; actions.

20. *That doeth evil.* Every wicked man. ¶ *Hateth the light.* This is true of all wicked men. They choose to practise their deeds of wickedness in darkness. They are afraid of the light because they could be easily detected. Hence most crimes are committed in the night. So with the sinner against God. He hates the gospel, for it condemns his conduct, and his conscience would trouble him if it were enlightened. ¶ *His deeds should be reprov'd.* To reprove here means not only to detect, or make manifest, but also includes the idea of condemnation when they are detected. The gospel would make his wickedness manifest, and his conscience would condemn him. We learn from this verse, 1. That one design of the gospel is to reprove men. It convicts them of sin in order that it may afford consolation. 2. That men by nature hate the gospel. No man who is a sinner loves it. And no man by nature



cometh <sup>1</sup> to the light, lest his deeds should be <sup>2</sup> reprov'd.

21 But he that doeth <sup>3</sup> truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought <sup>4</sup> in God.

22 ¶ After these things came

<sup>1</sup> Job xxiv. 13, 17. Prov. iv. 18, 19. <sup>2</sup> Or discover'd. <sup>3</sup> 1 John i. 6. <sup>4</sup> 3 John 11.

is disposed to come to it, any more than an adulterer, or thief, is disposed to come to the daylight and do his deeds of wickedness there. 3. The reason why the gospel is hated is that men are sinners. Christ is hated because sin is loved. 4. The sinner must be convicted. If it be not in this world it will be in the next. There is no escape for him; and the only way to avoid condemnation in the world to come, is to come humbly and acknowledge sin here, and seek for pardon.

21. *He that doeth truth.* He who does right; or, he that obeys the truth. *Truth* here is opposed to error and to evil. The sinner acts from falsehood and error. The good man acts according to truth. The sinner believes a lie, that God will not punish; or that there is no God; or that there is no eternity, or no hell. The Christian believes all these, and acts as if they were true. This is the difference between a Christian and a sinner. ¶ *Cometh to the light.* Loves the truth, and seeks it more and more. By prayer and searching the scriptures, he endeavours to ascertain the truth, and yield his mind to it. ¶ *May be made manifest.* May be made clear or plain; or that it may be made plain that his deeds are wrought in God. He searches for truth and light that he may have evidence that his actions are right. ¶ *Wrought in God.* That they are performed according to the will of God; or perhaps by the assistance of God, and are such as God will approve. The actions of good men are performed by the influence and aid of God. Phil. ii. 13. Of course if they are performed by his aid, they are such as he will approve. Here is presented the character of a good man, and a sincere Christian. We learn respecting that character, 1. He does truth. He loves it, seeks it, follows it. 2. He comes to the light. He does not attempt to deceive himself or others. 3. He is willing and anxious

Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and <sup>5</sup> baptized.

23 ¶ And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, <sup>6</sup> because there was much water there: and <sup>7</sup> they came, and were baptized.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. iv. 2. <sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. ix. 4. <sup>7</sup> Matt. iii. 5, 6. Mark i. 4. Luke iii. 7.

to know himself. He desires to know the true state of his heart before God. 4. An especial object of his efforts is, that his deeds may be wrought in God. He desires to be a good man; to receive continual aid from God, and to perform such actions as he will approve.

This is the close of our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, a discourse condensing the gospel; giving the most striking exhibition and illustration of truth; and representing especially the fundamental doctrine of regeneration, and the evidence of the change. It is clear that the Saviour regarded regeneration as lying at the foundation of religion. Without it we cannot possibly be saved. And now it becomes every reader, as in the presence of God, and in view of the judgment-seat of Christ, solemnly to ask himself whether he has experienced this change! Whether he knows by experience what it is to be born of that Spirit! If he does, he will be saved. If not, he is in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, and should give no sleep to his eyes till he has made his peace with God.

22. *Land of Judea.* The region round about Jerusalem. ¶ *And baptized.* Jesus did not himself administer the ordinance of baptism, but his disciples did it by his direction and authority. John iv. 2.

23. *In Ænon.* This place is probably in the plain of Jordan a little south of Bethshean, and in the tribes of Ephraim and Gad. It was situated on the west side of the Jordan. ¶ *Near to Salim.* Salim was a few miles west of Ænon, and a little south of mount Hermon. These places are about twenty-five miles north of Bethabars, or Bethany, where Jesus was baptized. ¶ *Because there was much water there.* John's preaching attracted multitudes. It appears that they remained with him, probably many days. In many parts of that country,

24 For John<sup>1</sup> was not yet cast into prison.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv. 12; xiv. 3. Mark vi. 17.

particularly in the hilly region near where John preached, it was difficult to find water to accommodate the necessity of the people, and perhaps also of the camels, with which those from a distance would come. To meet their necessities, as well as for the purpose of baptizing, he selected a spot that was well watered, probably with springs and rivulets. Whether the ordinance of baptism was performed by immersion, or in any other mode, the selection of a place well watered was proper and necessary. The mention of the fact that there was much water there, and that John selected that as a convenient place to perform his office as a baptizer, proves nothing in regard to the mode in which the ordinance was administered, since he would naturally select such a place, whatever was the mode. Where numbers of people came together to remain any time, it was necessary to select such a place, whatever was their employment. An encampment of soldiers is made on the same principles, and in every camp-meeting that I have ever seen, a place is selected where there is a good supply of water, though not one person should be immersed during the whole services. As all the facts in the case are fully met by the supposition that John might have baptized in some other way besides immersion; and as it is easy to conceive another reason that is sufficient to account for the fact that such a place was selected, this passage certainly should not be adduced to prove that he performed baptism only in that manner.

24. *For John was not yet cast into prison.* See Luke iii. 20. The mention of this shows that John was not imprisoned till some time after our Lord entered on his ministry. The design of John was to call men to repentance, and prepare them for the Messiah, and this he continued to do after our Saviour commenced his work. It shows that a minister of religion should be industrious to the day of his death. John still toiled in his work not the less because the Messiah had come. So ministers should not labour less when Christ appears by his Spirit, and takes the work into his own hands, and turns many to himself.

25 ¶ Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

25. *A question.* Rather a controversy. A dispute. ¶ *John's disciples.* Those who had been baptized by him, and who attached great efficacy and importance to the teaching of their Master. ¶ *And the Jews.* Many manuscripts, and some of the fathers, and the ancient Syriac version, read this in the singular number, "with a Jew," one who, it is commonly supposed, had been baptized by the disciples of Jesus. ¶ *About purifying.* What the precise subject of this dispute was, we do not know. From what follows, it would seem it was about the comparative value and efficacy of the baptism performed by John, and that by the disciples of Jesus. The word *purifying* may be applied to baptism, as it was an emblem of repentance and purity, and thus used by the Jews, by John, and by Jesus. About this subject it seems that a dispute arose, and was carried to such a length that complaint was made to John. From this we may learn, 1. That even in the time of Jesus, when the gospel began to be preached, there were witnessed, what have been witnessed ever since, unhappy disputings on the subject of religion. Even young converts may, by over-heated zeal and ignorance, fall into angry discussion. 2. That such discussions are commonly about some unimportant matter of religion, something which they may not yet be qualified to understand, and which does not materially affect them if they could understand it. 3. That such disputes often are connected with a spirit of proselytism, with boasting of the superior excellence of the sect with which we are connected, or with whom we have been converted, and often with a desire to persuade others to join with us. 4. That such a spirit is eminently improper on such occasions. Love should characterize the feelings of young converts; a disposition to inquire and not to dispute; a willingness that all should follow the dictates of their own consciences, and not a desire to proselyte them to our way of thinking, or to our church. It may be added, that there is scarcely anything which so certainly and effectually arrests a revival of religion as such a disposition to dispute, and to make proselytes to particular

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou <sup>1</sup> barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all <sup>2</sup> men come to him.

27 John answered and said, A <sup>3</sup> man can <sup>4</sup> receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 7, 15—34. <sup>2</sup> Psa. lxx. 2. Isa. xlv. 23. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 12—14; iv. 7. Heb. v. 4. Jas. i. 17. <sup>4</sup> Or, take unto himself.

modes of faith and of administering the ordinance of the gospel.

26. *Came unto John.* Came to him with their complaint; envious and jealous at the success of Jesus, and evidently irritated from the discussion, as if their master was about to lose his popularity. ¶ *Rabbi.* Master. Acknowledging him as their master and teacher. ¶ *That was with thee.* Who was baptized by thee. ¶ *Thou barest witness.* See ch. i. 29—35. ¶ *All men come to him.* This was the source of their difficulty. It was, that Jesus was gaining popularity, that the people flocked to him, and they feared that John would be forsaken, and his followers be diminished in numbers and influence. Thus many love their sect more than they do Christ, and would be more rejoiced that a man became a Presbyterian, a Methodist, a Baptist, than that he became a sincere and humble Christian. This is not the spirit of the gospel. True piety teaches us to rejoice that sinners turn to Christ, and become holy, whether they follow us or not. Let Jesus be exalted, and let men turn to him, is the language of religion, whatever denomination the converted may feel it their duty to follow.

27. *John answered, &c.* John did not enter into their feelings, or side with their love of party. He came to honour Jesus, not to build up a sect. He rejoiced at the success of the Messiah, and began to teach them to rejoice in it also. ¶ *A man can receive nothing, &c.* All success is from heaven. All my success was from God. All the success of Jesus is from God. As success comes from the same source, we ought not to be envious. It is designed to answer the same end, and by whomsoever accomplished,

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, <sup>5</sup> I am not the Christ, but that <sup>6</sup> I am sent before him.

29 He that hath the bride <sup>7</sup> is the bridegroom: but the friend <sup>8</sup> of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly

<sup>5</sup> Ch. i. 30, 37. <sup>6</sup> Luke i. 17. <sup>7</sup> Cant. iv. 8—12. Jer. ii. 2. Ezek. xvi. 8. Hos. ii. 13, 21. Matt. xxii. 2. <sup>8</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 2. Eph. v. 25, 27. Rev. xxi. 8. <sup>9</sup> Cant. v. 1.

the hand of God is in it, and we should rejoice. If Jesus and his disciples are successful, if all men flee to him, it is proof that God favours him, and you should rejoice.

28. *Bear me witness.* You remember that at first I told you I was not the Messiah. Ch. i. 3, 11. Matt. iii. 25—36. As he had been witness to Jesus, as he came for no other end but to point him out to the Jews, they ought not to suppose that John was his superior. And it was but reasonable to expect that he would be more successful than his forerunner. I came not to form a separate party, a peculiar sect, but to prepare the way that he might be more successful, and that the people might be ready for his coming, and fitted for the success which he has actually met with. You should rejoice, therefore, at that success, and not envy it, for his success is the best proof of the greatness of my word, and of its success also.

29. *He that hath the bride, &c.* This is an illustration drawn from marriage. The bride belongs to her husband. So the church, the bride of the Messiah, belongs to him. It is to be expected, therefore, and desired, that the people should flock to him. ¶ *But the friend of the bridegroom.* He whose office it is to attend him on the marriage occasion. This was commonly the nearest friend, and was a high honour. ¶ *Rejoiceth greatly.* Esteems himself highly honoured by the proof of friendship, and rejoices in it. ¶ *The bridegroom's voice.* His commands, requests, or conversation. ¶ *This my joy, &c.* I sustain to the Messiah the relation which a bridegroom's man does to the bridegroom. The chief honour and the chief joy is not mine, but his. It

because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

31 He that cometh from above<sup>1</sup> is above all: he<sup>2</sup> that is of the

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 33; viii. 23; xvi. 27, 28. Eph. i. 20, 21. <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 47. Heb. ix. 1, 9, 10.

is to be expected, therefore, that the people will come to him, and that his success will be great. The relation of Christ to the church is often compared to the marriage relation, denoting the tenderness of the union, and his great love for his people. Compare Isa. lxii. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 2. Eph. v. 26, 27, 32. Rev. xxi. 2, 9; xxii. 17.

30. *He must increase.* His authority and influence among the people must grow. His doctrine shall continue to spread till it extends through all the earth. ¶ *I must decrease.* The purpose of my ministry is to point men to him. When that is done, my work must cease. I came not to form a party of my own, nor to set up a religion of my own. And my teaching must cease when he is fully established, as the light of the morning star fades away and is lost in the beams of the rising sun. This evinced John's humility and willingness to be esteemed as nothing if he could honour Christ. It shows us also that it is sufficient honour for man, if he may be permitted to point sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ. No work is so honourable and joyful as the ministry of the gospel, and none are so highly honoured as those who are permitted to stand near the Son of God, to hear his voice, and to lead perishing men to his cross. Compare Dan. xii. 3.

31. *He that cometh from above.* The Messiah, represented as coming down from heaven. See ver. 13; ch. vi. 33; viii. 23. It has been doubted whether the remainder of this chapter contains the words of John the Baptist, or of the evangelist. The former is the more probable opinion, but it is difficult to decide it, and it is of very little consequence. ¶ *Is above all.* In nature, rank, and authority. Is superior to all prophets, Heb. i. 1, 2; to all angels, Heb. i. 4—14, and is over all the universe as its sovereign Lord. Rom. ix. 5.

earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no<sup>3</sup> man receiveth his testimony.

33 He that hath received his

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 23, 33; ch. i. 11. Isa. i. 2; lili. 1. Rom. x. 16—21; xi. 2—6.

1 Cor. xv. 25. Eph. i. 21, 22. Col. i. 15—19. ¶ *He that is of the earth.* He who has no higher nature than the human nature. The prophets, apostles, and John were men like others, born in the same way, and sinking like others to the dust. Jesus had a nature superior to man, and ought, therefore, to be exalted above all. ¶ *Is earthly.* Is human. Is inferior to him who comes from heaven. Partakes of his origin, which is inferior and corrupt. ¶ *Speaketh of the earth.* His teaching is inferior to that of him who comes from heaven. It is comparatively obscure and imperfect, not full and clear, like the teaching of him who is from above. This was the case with all the prophets, and even with John the Baptist.

32. *And what he hath seen, &c.* See ver. 11. ¶ *No man receiveth his testimony.* The words *no man* are here to be understood in the sense of *few*. Though his doctrine is pure, plain, sublime, yet few comparatively received it in faith. Though multitudes came to him, drawn by various motives, ch. vi. 26, yet few became his real disciples. Matt. vii. 22; xxvi. 56. ¶ *His testimony.* His doctrine. The truth to which he bears witness as having seen and known it. Ver. 11. Often many persons appear for a time to become the followers of Christ, who in the end are seen to have known nothing of religion.

33 *He that hath received his testimony.* Hath received and fully believed his doctrine. Hath yielded his heart to its influence. ¶ *Hath set to his seal.* To seal an instrument is to make it sure, to acknowledge it as ours, and to pledge our veracity that it is true and binding, as when a man seals a bond, a deed, or a will. Believing a doctrine, therefore, in the heart, is expressed by sealing it, or by believing it we express our firm conviction that it is true, and that God who has

testimony hath <sup>1</sup> set to his seal that God is true.

34 For <sup>2</sup> he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God : for God giveth not the Spirit by measure <sup>3</sup> unto him.

35 The Father loveth the Son,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii. 3, 4. Tit. i. 1, 2. 1 John v. 10. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 16. <sup>3</sup> Ch. i. 16. Psa. xiv. 7. Isa. xl. 2; lix. 21. Col. i. 19.

spoken it is true. We vouch for the veracity of God, and assume as our own the proposition that it is the truth of God. ¶ *God is true.* Is faithful, is the author of the system of doctrines, and will fulfil all that he has promised. We learn here : 1. That to be a believer is something more than to hold a mere speculative belief of the truth. 2. That to be a believer is to pledge ourselves for the truth, to seal it as our own, to adopt it, and choose it, and solemnly assent to it, as a man does to an instrument or writing that is to convey his property, or that is to dispose of it when he dies. 3. Every Christian is a witness for God, and it is his business to show by his life that he believes that God is true to his threatenings and to his promises. See Notes, Isa. xliii. 10. 4. It is a solemn act to become a Christian. It is a surrender of all to God, or giving away body, soul, and spirit to him, with a belief that he is true, and alone is able to save. 5. The man that does not do this, that is not willing to pledge his belief that God is true, sets to his seal that God is a liar and unworthy of confidence. 1 John v. 10.

34. *Whom God hath sent.* The Messiah. ¶ *Speaketh the words of God.* The truth, or commands of God. ¶ *The Spirit.* The Spirit of God. Though Jesus was God as well as man, yet as Mediator God anointed him, or endowed him with the influence of his Spirit, so that he was completely qualified for his great work. ¶ *By measure.* Not in a small degree, but fully, completely. The prophets were inspired on particular occasions to deliver special messages. The Messiah was continually filled with the Spirit of God. "The Spirit dwelt in him not as in a vessel, but as in a fountain, as in a bottomless ocean." (Henry.)

35. *Loveth the Son.* Loves him emi-

and hath given <sup>4</sup> all things into his hand.

36 He <sup>5</sup> that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life : and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath <sup>6</sup> of God abideth on him.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18. <sup>5</sup> Ver. 15, 16. Heb. ii. 4. <sup>6</sup> Psa. ii. 12. Rom. i. 18. Gal. iii. 10. Eph. v. 6.

nently, above all the prophets and other messengers of God. ¶ *Hath given all things.* See Note, Matt. xxviii. 18.

36. *Hath everlasting life.* Has or is in possession of that which is a recovery from spiritual death, and which shall result in eternal life in heaven. Piety here is what it will be there, except that it will be expanded, matured, purified, made more glorious. Here it is life begun; the first breathings and paintings of the soul for immortality; yet it is life, though at first feeble and faint, which is eternal in its nature, and which shall be matured in the full and perfect bliss of heaven. The Christian here has a foretaste of the world of glory, and enjoys the same kind of felicity, though not the same degree, that he will enjoy there. ¶ *Shall not see life.* Shall neither enjoy true life or happiness here nor in the world to come. Shall never enter heaven. ¶ *The wrath of God.* The anger of God for sin. His opposition to sin, and its terrible effects in this world and the next. ¶ *Abideth on him.* This implies that he is now under the wrath of God, or under condemnation. It implies also that it will continue to remain on him. It will abide or dwell on him as its appropriate habitation. As there is no way of escaping the wrath of God but by the Lord Jesus Christ, so those who will not believe must go into eternity as they are, and bear alone and unpitied all that God may choose to inflict as the expression of his sense of sin. Such is the miserable condition of the sinner! Yet thousands choose to remain in this state, and to encounter alone all that is terrible in the wrath of Almighty God, rather than to come to Jesus, who has borne their sins in his own body on the tree, and who is willing to bless them with the peace, and purity, and joy of immortal life.

## CHAPTER IV.

*The conversation with the woman of Samaria, 1—26. The wonder of the disciples, and the ripening harvest, 27—38. Many Samaritans come to Christ and believe, 39—42. The nobleman's son healed, 43—54.*

**W**HEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized <sup>1</sup> more disciples than John,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iii. 22, 26.

## CHAPTER IV.

1. *The Lord knew.* When Jesus knew. ¶ *How the Pharisees had heard.* The Pharisees here seem to denote either the members of the sanhedrim, or those who were in authority. They claimed the authority to regulate the rites and ceremonies of religion, and hence they supposed they had a right to inquire into the conduct of both John and our Lord. On a former occasion they had sent to inquire of John to know by what authority he had introduced a new rite into the religion of the people. See Note, ch. i. 25. ¶ *More disciples than John.* Though many of the Pharisees came to his baptism, Matt. iii., yet those who were in authority were displeased with the success of John. The reasons of this were probably the severity and justness of his reproofs, Matt. iii. 7, and the fact that he drew many after him, and thus weakened their authority and influence. As they were displeased with John so they were with Jesus, who was doing the same thing on a larger scale, not only making disciples, but baptizing also without their authority, and drawing away the people after him.

2. *Though Jesus himself baptized not.* The reason why Jesus did not baptize was, probably because if he had baptized, it might have made unhappy divisions among his followers: those might have considered themselves most worthy or honoured who had been baptized by him. Compare 1 Cor. i. 17.

3. *He left Judea.* The envy and malice of the Pharisees he might have known were growing so rapidly as to endanger his life. As his time to die had not yet come, he retired to Galilee, a country

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

3 He left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs <sup>2</sup> go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave <sup>3</sup> to his son Joseph.

<sup>2</sup> Luke ii. 49; ix. 51, 52; xvii. 11. <sup>3</sup> Gen. xxxiii. 19; xiviii. 22. Jos. xxiv. 32.

farther from Jerusalem and much less under their control than Judea. See Mark iii. 6, 7. Luke iii. 1. Though Jesus feared not death, and did not shrink from suffering, yet he did not needlessly throw himself into danger, or provoke opposition. He could do as much good in Galilee probably as in Judea, and he therefore withdrew himself from immediate danger.

4. *And he must needs go through Samaria.* Samaria was between Judea and Galilee. The direct and usual way was to pass through Samaria. Sometimes, however, the Jews took a circuitous route on the east side of the Jordan. See Note, Matt. ii. 22.

5. *Sychar.* This city stood about fifteen miles south of the city called Samaria, between mount Ebal and mount Gerizim. It was one of the oldest cities of Palestine, and was formerly known by the name of Shechem, or Sichem. Gen. xii. 6, xxxiii. 18. The city was in the tribe of Ephraim. Josh. xxi. 21. It was at this place that Joshua assembled the people before his death, and here they renewed their covenant with the Lord. Josh. xxiv. After the death of Gideon it became a place of idolatrous worship, the people worshipping Baalberith. Judg. ix. 46. It was destroyed by Abimelech, who beat down the city and sowed it with salt. Judg. ix. 45. It was afterwards rebuilt, and became the residence of Jeroboam, the king of Israel. 1 Kin. xii. 25. It was called by the Romans Flavia Neapolis, and this has been corrupted by the Arabs into Naplous, its present name. It is still a considerable place, and its site is remarkably pleasant and productive. ¶ *The parcel of ground.* The piece of ground,

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, <sup>1</sup> sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. <sup>2</sup>

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city <sup>3</sup> to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that

<sup>1</sup> Luke ix. 58. <sup>2</sup> Cor. viii. 9. <sup>3</sup> Gen. xxiv. 43. <sup>4</sup> Sam. xxiii. 15-17. <sup>5</sup> 1 Kin. xvii. 10. Matt. x. 42. <sup>6</sup> Ch. vi. 5-7. Luke ix. 13.

or the land, &c. ¶ *That Jacob gave, &c.* Jacob bought one piece of ground near to Shalem, a city of Shechem, of the children of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred pieces of silver. Gen. xxxiii. 19. In this place the bones of Joseph were buried when they were brought up from Egypt. Josh. xxiv. 32. He also gave to Joseph an additional piece of ground which he took from the hand of the Amorite by his own valour, 'with his sword and his bow,' as a portion above that which was given to his brethren. Gen. xlviii. 22. Possibly these pieces of ground lay near together, and were a part of the homestead of Jacob. The well was near to this. There is now, the Rev. E. Smith mentioned to me in conversation, a place near this well called Shalem.

6. *Jacob's well.* This is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It was called Jacob's well probably either because it was handed down by tradition that he dug it, or because it was near to the land which he gave to Joseph. There is still a well a few miles to the east of Naplous, which is said by the people there to be the same. The Rev. Eli Smith, missionary to Syria, stated to me that he had visited this well. It is about one hundred feet deep. It is cut through solid rock of limestone. It is now dry, probably from having been partly filled with rubbish, or perhaps because the water has been diverted by earthquakes. The well is covered with a large stone, which has a hole in the centre large enough to admit a man. It is at the foot of mount Gerizim, and has a *p.ain* on the east. ¶ *Sat thus.* Jesus was weary, and being thus weary, sat down on the well. The word translated

thou, being a Jew, <sup>4</sup> askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings <sup>5</sup> with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift <sup>6</sup> of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living <sup>7</sup> water.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 48. Luke x. 33; xvii. 16-19. <sup>5</sup> 2 Kin. xvii. 24-41. Acts x. 28. <sup>6</sup> Eph. ii. 8. <sup>7</sup> Isa. xli. 3; xlii. 17, 18. Jer. ii. 13. Zech. xiii. 1; xiv. 8. Rev. xxi. 17.

on here may denote also by. He sat down by the well, or near it. ¶ *The sixth hour.* About twelve o'clock. This was the common time of the Jewish meal, and this was the reason why his disciples were gone away to buy food. Ver. 8.

7. *Of Samaria.* Not of the city of Samaria, for this was at a distance of fifteen miles, but a woman who was a Samaritan, and doubtless from the city of Sychar. ¶ *Give me to drink.* This was in the heat of the day, and when Jesus was weary with his journey. The request was also made that it might give him occasion to discourse with her on the subject of religion, and in this instance we have a specimen of the remarkably happy manner in which Jesus could lead on a conversation so as to introduce the subject of religion.

8. *Buy meat.* Buy food.

9. *No dealings with the Samaritans.* For an account of the Samaritans, and of the differences between them and the Jews, See Note, Matt. x. 5.

10. *The gift of God.* The word *gift* here denotes favour. It may refer to Jesus himself as the gift of God to the world, given to save men from death, ch. iii. 16, or it may refer to the opportunity then afforded her of seeking salvation. If thou knewest how favourable an opportunity God now gives thee to gain a knowledge of himself, &c. ¶ *And who it is, &c.* If thou knewest that the Messiah was speaking. ¶ *Living water.* The Jews used the expression *living water* to denote springs, or fountains, or running streams, in opposition to dead and stagnant water. Jesus here means to denote by it his doctrine, or his grace and

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art <sup>1</sup>thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 53. Isa. liii. 2, 3. Heb. iii. 3.

religion, in opposition to the impure and dead notions of the Jews and the Samaritans. See ver. 14. This was one of the many instances in which Jesus took occasion from common topics of conversation to introduce religious discourse. None ever did it so happily as he did. But by studying his example and manner, we may learn always to do it. One way to acquire the art is to have the mind full of the subject, to make religion our first and main thing, to carry it with us into all employments and into all society, to look upon every thing in a religious light, and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak.

11. *Hast nothing to draw with.* It seems that there were no means of drawing water affixed to the well, as is frequent in this country. Probably each one took a pail or pitcher and a cord for the purpose. In travelling this was indispensable. The woman, seeing that Jesus had no means of drawing water, and not yet understanding his design, naturally inquired whence he could obtain the water. ¶ *The well is deep.* If the same one that is there now, it was about a hundred feet deep.

12. *Art thou greater.* Art thou wiser, or better able to find water, than Jacob was? It seems that she supposed he meant that he could direct her to some living spring, or to some better well in that region, and that this implied more knowledge or skill than Jacob had. To find water, and to furnish a good well, was doubtless considered a matter of signal skill and success. Water was of great importance in that region. This shows how ready sinners are to misunderstand the words of Christ, and to pervert the doctrines of religion. If she had had any proper anxiety about her soul, she would at least have suspected that he meant to direct her thoughts to spiritual objects. ¶ *Our father Jacob.* The Sa-

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But <sup>2</sup>whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; <sup>3</sup>but the water that I shall give him shall be in

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 35, 58. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xvii. 2, 3. Isa. xlix. 10. Rom. vi. 23.

maritans were composed partly of the remnant of the ten tribes, and partly of people sent from Chaldea. Still they considered themselves descendants of Jacob. ¶ *Which gave us.* This was doubtless the tradition, though there is no evidence that it was true. ¶ *And drank thereof, &c.* This was added in commendation of the water of the well. A well from which Jacob and his sons and cattle had drunk must be pure, and wholesome, and honoured, and quite as valuable as any that Jesus could furnish. Men like to commend that which their ancestors used, as superior to any thing else. The world over, people love to speak of that which their ancestors have done, become fond of titles and honours, that have been handed down, even if it is nothing better than existed here, because Jacob's cattle had drunk of the water.

13. *Shall thirst again.* Jesus did not directly answer her question, or say that he was greater than Jacob, but he gave her an answer by which she might infer that he was. He did not despise or undervalue Jacob or his gifts. But however great might be the value of that well, the water could not altogether remove thirst.

14. *The water that I shall give him.* Jesus here refers without doubt to his teaching, his grace, his Spirit, and the benefits which come into the soul that embraces his gospel. It is a striking image, and especially in eastern countries where there are vast deserts and often a great want of water. The soul by nature is like such a desert, or like a traveller wandering through such a desert. It is thirsting for happiness, and seeking it every where, and finds it not. It looks in all directions, tries all objects, but in vain. Nothing meets its desires. Though a sinner seeks for joy in wealth and pleasures, yet he is not satisfied. He still thirsts for more, and seeks still for happi-



him <sup>1</sup> a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 38. Rom. v. 21; viii. 16, 17.

ness in some new enjoyment. To such a weary and unsatisfied sinner the grace of Christ is as cold water to a thirsty soul. ¶ *Shall never thirst.* He shall be satisfied with this; and will not have a sense of want, a distressing feeling that it is not adapted to him. He who drinks this water will not wish to seek for happiness in other objects. Satisfied with the grace of Christ, he will not desire the pleasures and amusements of this world. And this will be for ever, in this world and the world to come. *Whosoever* drinketh of this; all who partake of the gospel shall be for ever satisfied with its pure and rich joys. ¶ *Shall be in him.* The grace of Christ shall be in his heart; or the principles of religion shall abide with him. ¶ *A well of water.* There shall be a constant supply, an unfailing fountain; or religion shall live constantly with him. ¶ *Springing up.* This is a beautiful image. It shall bubble or spring up like a fountain. It is not like a stagnant pool; not like a deep well, but like an ever-living fountain that plays at all seasons of the year, in heat and cold, and in all external circumstances—in heat and cold, hunger and thirst, prosperity and affliction, life, persecution, contempt, or death, it still lives on, and refreshes and cheers the soul. ¶ *Into everlasting life.* It is not temporary like the supply of the natural wants. It is not changing in its nature. It is not like a natural fountain or spring of water, to play awhile and then die away, as all natural springs will at the end of the world. It is eternal in its nature and supply, and will continue to live on for ever. We may learn here: 1. That the Christian has a never-failing source of consolation adapted to all times and circumstances. 2. That religion has

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: <sup>2</sup> in that saidst thou truly.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. iii. 20. Esak. xvi. 22. Mark x. 12.

its seat in the heart, and that it should constantly live there. 3. That it sheds its blessings on a world of sin, and is manifest by a continual life of piety, like a constant bubbling spring. 4. That its end is everlasting life. It will continue for ever; and whosoever drinks of this shall never thirst, but his piety shall be in his heart a pure fountain springing up to everlasting life.

15. *The woman said, &c.* It may seem strange that the woman did not yet understand him; but it shows how slow sinners are to understand the doctrines of religion.

16. *Go, call thy husband.* We may admire the manner which our Saviour took to lead her to perceive that he was the Christ. His instructions she did not understand. He therefore proceeded to show her that he was acquainted with her life, and with her sins. His object, here, was to lead her to consider her own state and sinfulness, a delicate and yet pungent way of leading her to see that she was a sinner. By showing her, also, that he knew her life, though a stranger to her, he convinced her that he was qualified to teach her the way to heaven, and thus prepared her to admit that he was the Messiah. Ver. 29.

17. *I have no husband.* This was said evidently to evade the subject. Perhaps she feared that if she came there with the man that she lived with, the truth might be exposed. It is not improbable that by this time she began to suspect that Jesus was a prophet. ¶ *Hast well said.* *Hast* said the truth.

18. *Hast had five husbands.* Who have either died; or who, on account of your improper conduct, have divorced you; or whom you have left improperly, without legal divorce. Either of these might have been the case. ¶ *Is not thy husband.* You are not lawfully mar-

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive <sup>1</sup> that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; <sup>2</sup> and ye say, that

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 29; ch. i. 48. 49. <sup>2</sup> Kin. v. 26; vi. 12. Luke vii. 39. <sup>3</sup> Judg. ix. 7.

ried to him. Either she might have left a former husband without divorce, and thus her marriage with this man was unlawful, or she was living with him without the form of marriage, in open guilt.

19. *A prophet.* One sent from God, and who understood her life. The word here does not denote one who foretels future events, but one who knew her heart and life, and who must therefore be from God. She did not yet suppose him to be the Messiah. Ver. 25. Believing him now to be a man sent from God, she proposed to him a question respecting the proper place of worship. This question had been long disputed between the Samaritans and the Jews. She submitted it to him, because she thought he could settle the question, and perhaps because she wished to divert the conversation from the unpleasant topic respecting her husband. The conversation about her manner of life was a very unpleasant topic to her, as it is always unpleasant to sinners to talk about their lives, and the necessity of religion, and she was glad to turn the conversation to something else. Nothing is more common than for sinners to change the conversation when it begins to bear too hard upon their consciences; and no way of doing this is more common than to direct conversation to some speculative inquiry having some sort of connexion with religion, as if to show that they are willing to talk about religion, and do not wish to appear to be opposed to it. Sinners do not love direct religious conversation, but many are too well-bred to refuse to talk entirely about it. Yet they choose to converse about some speculative matter, or something pertaining to mere externals, rather than the salvation of their own souls. So sinners often now change the conversation to some inquiry about a preacher, or about some doctrine, or about building or repairing a place of worship, or about a sabbath school, in order to seem to talk about religion, and yet to

in Jerusalem <sup>3</sup> is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when <sup>4</sup> ye shall neither in this mountain,

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xii. 5—11. <sup>1</sup> Kin. ix. 3. <sup>4</sup> Mal. i. 11. Matt. xviii. 20.

evade close and faithful appeals to their own consciences.

20. *Our fathers.* The Samaritans; perhaps the woman intended to include the patriarchs also. See Gen. xii. 6; xxxiii. 20. ¶ *Worshipped.* Had a place of worship. ¶ *In this mountain.* Mount Gerizim, but a little way from Sychar. On this mountain they had built a temple somewhat similar to the temple in Jerusalem. This was one of the main subjects of controversy between them and the Jews. The old Samaritan Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, has the word Gerizim instead of Ebal, in Deut. xxvii. 4. On this account, as well as because the patriarchs are mentioned as having worshipped in Shechem, they supposed that that was the proper place on which to erect the temple. ¶ *Ye say.* Ye Jews. ¶ *In Jerusalem.* The place where the temple was built. This was built in accordance with the promise and command of God. Deut. xii. 5, 11. In building this, David and Solomon were under the divine direction. 2 Sam. vii. 2, 3, 13. 1 Kin. v. 5, 12; viii. 15—21. As it was contemplated in the law of Moses that there should be but one place to offer sacrifice and to hold the great feasts, so it followed that the Samaritans were in error in supposing that their temple was the place. Accordingly our Saviour decided in favour of the Jews, yet in such a manner as to show the woman that the question was of much less consequence than they supposed it to be.

21. *Believe me.* As she had professed to believe that he was a prophet, it was right to require her to put faith in what he was about to utter. It also shows the importance of what he was about to say. ¶ *The hour cometh.* The time is coming, or is near. ¶ *When neither in this mountain, &c.* Hitherto the public solemn worship of God has been confined to one place. It has been a matter of dispute whether that place should be

nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship <sup>1</sup> ye know not what: we know what we worship: for <sup>2</sup> salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. xvii. 29.    <sup>2</sup> Isa. li. 3.    Rom. ix. 5.

Jerusalem or mount Gerizim. That controversy is to be of much less importance than you have supposed. The old dispensation is about to pass away. The peculiar rites of the Jews are to cease. The worship of God, so long confined to a single place, is soon to be observed every where, and with as much acceptance in one place as in another. Jesus does not say that there would be no worship of God in that place, or in Jerusalem, but that the worship of God would not be restricted to those places. He would be worshipped in other places as well as there.

22. *Ye worship ye know not what.* This probably refers to the comparative ignorance and corruption of the Samaritan worship. Though they received the five books of Moses, yet they rejected the prophets, and of course all that the prophets had said respecting the true God. Originally, also, they had joined the worship of idols to that of the true God. See 2 Kin. xvii. 26—34. They had, moreover, no authority for building their temple and conducting public worship by sacrifices there. On all these accounts they were acting in an unauthorised manner. They were not obeying the true God, nor offering the worship which he had commanded or would approve. Jesus thus indirectly settled the question which she had proposed to him, yet in such a way as to show her that it was of much less importance than she had supposed. ¶ *We know.* We Jews. This they knew because God had commanded it: because they worshipped in a place commanded by God; and because they worshipped in accordance with the direction and teaching of the prophets. ¶ *Salvation is of the Jews.* They have the true religion and the true form of worship; and the Messiah, who will bring salvation, is to proceed from them. See Luke ii. 30; iii. 6. Jesus thus affirms that the Jews had the true form of the worship of God. At the same time he was sensible how

shall worship the Father in spirit <sup>1</sup> and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God <sup>4</sup> is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 6.    Eph. vi. 18.    Phil. iii. 3.    Jude 20, 21.    <sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. iiii. 17.    1 Tim. i. 17.

much they had corrupted it, and on various occasions reprov'd those corruptions.

23. *And now is.* The old dispensation is about to pass away, and the new one to commence. Already there is so much light that God may be worshipped acceptably in any place. ¶ *The true worshippers.* All who truly and sincerely worship God. They who do it with the heart, and not merely in form. ¶ *In spirit.* The word spirit here stands opposed to rites and ceremonies, and to the pomp of external worship. It refers to the mind, the soul, the heart. They shall worship God with a sincere mind, with the simple offering of gratitude and prayer, with a desire to glorify him, and without external pomp and splendour. Spiritual worship is that where the heart is offered to God, and where we do not depend on external forms for acceptance. ¶ *In truth.* Not through the medium of shadows and types; not by means of sacrifices and bloody offerings; but in the manner represented or typified by all these. Heb. ix. 9, 24. Is the true way of direct access to God through Jesus Christ. ¶ *For the Father seeketh,* &c. Jesus gives two reasons why this kind of worship should be offered. One is, that God sought it, or desired it. He had appointed the old mode, but he did so because he sought to lead the mind to himself even by them, and to prepare the people for the purer system of the gospel. And now he sought or desired that those who worshipped him should worship him in that manner. He intimated his will by Jesus Christ.

24. *God is a spirit.* This is the second reason why men should worship him in spirit and in truth. By this is meant that God is without a body; that he is not material, or composed of parts; that he is invisible, that he is in every place, that he is pure and holy. This is one of the first truths of religion, and one of the sublimest truths ever presented to the mind of man. Almost all nations have had some idea of God as gross or material,

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, <sup>1</sup> I that speak unto thee am *he*.

27 ¶ And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 37. Matt. xvi. 20. Mark xiv. 61, 62.

but the Bible declares that he is a pure spirit. As he is such a spirit, he dwells "not in temples made with hands," Acts vii. 48, "neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things," Acts xvii. 25. A pure, a holy, a spiritual worship, therefore, is such as he seeks, the offering of the soul rather than the formal offering of the body, the homage of the heart rather than that of the lips.

25. *I know.* As the Samaritans acknowledged the five books of Moses, so they expected also the coming of the Messiah. ¶ *Which is called Christ.* These are probably the words of the evangelist, as it is not likely that the woman would explain the name on such an occasion. ¶ *Will tell us all things.* Jesus had decided the question proposed to him, ver. 20, in favour of the Jews. The woman does not seem to have been satisfied with his answer, and said that the Messiah would tell them all about this question. Probably she was expecting that he would soon appear.

26. *I—am he.* I am the Messiah. This was the first time that he so openly declared himself. He did not declare himself yet to the Jews, for it would have excited envy and opposition. But nothing could be apprehended in Samaria; and as the woman seemed reluctant to listen to him as a prophet, and professed her willingness to listen to him as the Messiah, he openly declared that he was the Christ, that by some means he might save her soul. From this we may learn, 1. The great wisdom of the Lord Jesus in leading the thoughts along to the subject of practical personal religion. 2. His knowledge of the heart and of the life. He must be, therefore, divine. 3. He gave evidence here that he was the Messiah. This was the design of

What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

28 The woman then left her water-pot, <sup>2</sup> and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxviii. 8. Mark xvi. 8—10. Luke xxiv. 9, 33.

John in writing this gospel. He has therefore recorded this narrative, which was omitted by the other evangelists. 4. We see our duty. It is to seize on all occasions to lead sinners to the belief that Jesus is the Christ, and to make use of all topics of conversation to teach them the nature of religion. There never was a model of so much wisdom in this as the Saviour; and we shall be successful only as we diligently study his character. 5. We see the nature of religion. It does not consist merely in external forms. It is pure, spiritual, active; an ever-bubbling fountain. It is the worship of a pure and holy God, in which the heart is offered, and the desires of an humble soul are breathed out for salvation.

27. *Upon this.* At this time. ¶ *Marvelled.* Wondered. They wondered because the Jews had no intercourse with the Samaritans, and they were surprised that Jesus was engaged with the woman in conversation. ¶ *Yet no man said.* No one of the disciples. They had a respect and reverence for him, and did not dare to ask him the reason of his conduct, or even to appear to reprove him. We should be confident that Jesus is right, even if we cannot fully understand all that he does.

28. *Left her water-pot.* Her mind was greatly excited. She was disturbed, and hastened to the city in great agitation to make this known. She seems to have been convinced that he was the Messiah, and went immediately to make it known to others. Our first business, when we have found the Saviour, should be to make him known also to others.

29. *Is not this the Christ?* Though she probably believed it, yet she proposed it modestly, lest she should appear to dictate in a case which was so important, and which demanded so much attention. The evidence on which she was satisfied that

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

31 ¶ In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciples

he was the Messiah was, that he had told her all things that she had done, perhaps much more than is here recorded. The question which she submitted to them was, whether this was not satisfactory proof that he was the Messiah!

30. *They went out of the city.* The men of the city left it and went to Jesus, to hear and examine for themselves.

31. *Prayed him.* Asked him.

32. *I have meat to eat.* See ver. 34.

33. *Hath any man brought him?* &c. This is one of the many instances in which the disciples were slow to understand the Saviour.

34. *My meat,* &c. Jesus here explains what he said in ver. 32. His great object, the great design of his life, was to do the will of God. He came to that place weary and thirsty, and at the usual time of meals, probably he was hungry. Yet an opportunity of doing good presented itself, and he forgot his fatigue and hunger, and found comfort and joy in doing the will of God, in doing good, in seeking to save a soul. This one great object absorbed all his powers, and made him forget his weariness and the wants of nature. The mind may be so absorbed in doing the will of God as to forget all other things. Intent on this, we may rise above fatigue, and hardship, and want, and bear all with pleasure in seeing the work of God advance. See Job xxiii. 12: "I have esteemed the words of his lips more than my necessary food." We may learn, also, that the main business of life is not to avoid fatigue, or to seek the supply of our temporal wants, but to do the will of God. The mere supply of our temporal necessities, though most men make it an object of their chief solicitude, is a small consideration in the sight of him who has just views of the great design of human life. ¶ *The will of him that sent me.*—all of God in regard to the salvation

one to another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat?

34 Jesus saith unto them, <sup>1</sup> My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish <sup>2</sup> his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 38. Job xxiii. 12. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xvii. 4

of men. See ch. vi. 38. ¶ *To finish his work.* To complete or fully to do the work which he has commanded in regard to the salvation of men. It is his work to provide salvation, and his to redeem, and his to apply the salvation to the heart. Jesus came to do these by teaching, by his example, and by his death. And he shows us that we should be diligent. If he was so diligent for our welfare; if he bore fatigue and want to benefit us, then we should be diligent also in regard to our own salvation, and also in seeking the salvation of others.

35. *Say not ye.* This seems to have been a proverb. Ye say; that is, men say. ¶ *Four months and,* &c. The common time from sowing the seed to the harvest, in Judea, was about four months. The meaning of this passage may be thus expressed: "The husbandman, when he sows his seed, is compelled to wait a considerable period before it produces a crop. He is encouraged in sowing it; he expects fruit; his labour is lightened by that expectation. But it is not immediate. It is remote. But it is not so with my preaching. The seed has already sprung up. Scarce was it sown before it produced an abundant harvest. The gospel was just preached to a woman, and see how many of the Samaritans come to hear it also. There is, therefore, more encouragement to labour in this field than the farmer has to sow his grain." ¶ *Lift up your eyes.* See the Samaritans coming to hear the gospel. ¶ *They are white.* Grain, when ripe, turns from a green to a yellow, or light colour, indicating that it is time to reap it. So here were indications that the gospel was effectual, and that the harvest was to be gathered in. Hence we may learn, 1. That there is as much encouragement to attempt to save souls as the farmer has to raise a crop. 2. That the gospel is fitted to make an immediate

up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to <sup>1</sup> harvest.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit <sup>2</sup> unto life eternal: that both <sup>3</sup> he that

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 37. <sup>2</sup> Rom. vi. 22. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 5-9.

impression on the minds of men. We are to expect impressions. We are not to wait to some future period, as if we could not look for immediate results. This wicked and ignorant people, little likely, apparently, to be affected, turned to God, heard the voice of the Saviour, and came in multitudes to him. 3. We are to expect revivals of religion. Here was one instance of it under the Saviour's own preaching; multitudes were excited, moved, and came to learn the way of life. 4. We know not how much good may be done by conversation with even a single individual. This conversation with a woman resulted in a deep interest felt throughout the city, and in the conversion of many of them to God. So a single individual may often be the means, in the hand of God, of leading many to the cross of Jesus. 5. What evils may follow from neglecting to do our duty! How easily might Jesus have alleged, if he had been like many of his professed disciples, that he was weary, that he was hungry, that it was esteemed improper to converse with a woman alone, that she was an abandoned character, and there could be little hope of doing her good! How many consciences of ministers and Christians would have been satisfied with reasoning like this! Yet Jesus, in spite of his fatigue and thirst, and all the difficulties of the case, seriously set about seeking the conversion of this woman. And behold what a glorious result! The city was moved, and a great harvest was found ready to be gathered in! "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

36. *He that reapeth.* He that gathers the harvest, or he who so preaches that souls are converted to Christ. ¶ *Receiveth wages.* The labourer in the harvest receives his hire. Jesus says it shall be thus with those who labour in the ministry: He will not suffer them to go unrewarded. See Dan. xii. 3. Matt. xix. 28. Gathereth

soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying true, One <sup>4</sup> soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that

<sup>4</sup> Jud. v. 31. Mic. vi. 15. Luke xix. 21.

fruit unto life eternal. Converts souls, who shall inherit eternal life. The harvest is not temporary, like gathering the grain, but shall result in eternal life. ¶ *That both he that soweth, &c.* It is a united work. It matters little whether we sow the seed, or whether we reap the harvest. It is part of the same work; and whatever part we perform, we should rejoice. God gives the increase, while Paul plants, and Apollos waters. The teacher in the Sunday school who sows the seed in early life, shall rejoice with the minister of the gospel who may gather in the harvest, and both join in giving all the praise to God.

37. *That saying.* That proverb. This proverb is found in some of the Greek writers. (Grotius.) Similar proverbs were in use among the Jews. See Lev. xxvi. 16. Isa. lxv. 21, 22. Mic. vi. 15. ¶ *One soweth, &c.* One man may preach the gospel, and with little apparent effect; another, succeeding him, may be crowned with eminent success. The seed, long-buried, may spring up in an abundant harvest.

38. *I sent you.* In the commission given you to preach the gospel. You have not laboured or toiled in preparing the way for the great harvest which is now to be gathered in. ¶ *Other men laboured.* 1. The prophets, who long laboured to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah. 2. The teachers among the Jews who have read and explained the law, and taught the people. 3. John the Baptist, who came to prepare the way. And, 4. The Saviour himself, who, by his personal ministry, taught the people, and prepared them for the success which was to attend the preaching of the apostles. Especially did Jesus lay the foundation for the rapid and extensive spread of the gospel. He saw comparatively little fruit of his ministry. He confined his labours to one country; and even there he was occupied in sowing seed which chiefly sprang up after his death.

whereon ye bestowed no labour : other <sup>1</sup> men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

39 ¶ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying <sup>2</sup> of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them : and he abode there two days.

41 And many more believed because of his own word ;

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying : for <sup>3</sup> we have heard him

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iii. 1—6 ; xl. 8—13. Acts x. 37, 38, 42, 43. <sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. i. 12. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 29. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xvii. 8. <sup>5</sup> 1 John iv. 14.

From this we may learn, 1. That the man who is crowned with eminent success has no cause of boasting over others, any more than the man who reaps a field of grain should boast over the man who sowed it. The labour of both is equally necessary ; and the labour of both would be useless if God did not give the increase.

2. We should not be discouraged if we do not meet with immediate success. The man that sows is not disheartened because he does not see the harvest immediately spring up. We are to sow our seed in the morning, and in the evening we are not to withhold our hand, for we know not whether shall prosper, this or that. And we are to go forth bearing precious seed, though weeping, knowing that we shall come again rejoicing, bearing our sheaves with us, Psa. cxxvi. 6. Eccl. xi. 4. 3. Every part of the work of the ministry, and of teaching men, is needful, and we should rejoice that we are permitted to bear any part, however humble, in bringing sinners to the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. xii. 21—24.

39—42. *Many of the Samaritans—believed.* There is seldom an instance of so remarkable success as this. From a single conversion, in circumstances, in a place, and with an individual, little likely to be attended with such results, many sinners were converted ; many believed on the

ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

43 ¶ Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

44 For Jesus himself testified, that <sup>4</sup> a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilæans received him, having seen <sup>5</sup> all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast : for <sup>6</sup> they also went unto the feast.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii. 57. Mark vi. 4. Luke iv. 24. <sup>5</sup> Ch. ii. 23. <sup>6</sup> Deut. xvi. 16.

testimony of the woman ; many more came to hear, and believed because they heard him themselves. We should never despair of doing good in the most unpromising circumstances ; and we should seize upon every opportunity to converse with sinners on the great subject of their souls' salvation.

43. *Into Galilee.* Into some of the parts of Galilee, though evidently not into Nazareth, but probably direct to Cana. Ver. 46.

44. *For Jesus himself testified, &c.* See Matt. xiii. 57. The connexion of this verse with the preceding may be thus explained : Jesus went to Galilee, but not to Nazareth, for he testified, &c. Or, Jesus went to Galilee, although he had said that a prophet had no honour in his own country, yet because he foreknew that many of the Galilæans would believe on him, he went at this time.

45. *Received him.* Received him kindly, or as a messenger of God. They had seen his miracles, and believed on him.

46. *A certain nobleman.* One who was of the royal family, connected by birth with Herod Antipas ; or, one of the officers of the court, whether by birth allied to him or not. It seems that his ordinary residence was at Capernaum. Capernaum was about a day's journey from Cana, where Jesus then was.

the water <sup>1</sup> wine. And there was a certain <sup>2</sup> nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs <sup>3</sup> and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ii. 1, 11.    <sup>2</sup> Or, *courtier*; or, *ruler*.  
<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. i. 22.

47. *He went unto him.* Though high in office, yet he did not refuse to go personally to Jesus to ask his aid. He felt as a father; and believing, after all that Jesus had done, that he could cure his son, he travelled to meet him. If men receive benefits of Christ, they must come in the same manner. The rich and the poor, the high and the low, must come personally as humble suppliants; and must be willing to bear all the reproach that may be cast on them for thus coming to him. This man showed strong faith in being willing thus to go to Jesus; but he erred in supposing that Jesus could heal only by his being present with his son. ¶ *Would come down.* It is probable that the miracles of Jesus heretofore had been performed only on those who were present with him. And this nobleman seems to have thought that this was necessary. One design of Jesus in working this miracle was to show that his being present was not necessary. Hence he did not go down to Capernaum, but healed the youth where he was.

48. *Except ye see signs, &c.* This was spoken not to the nobleman only, but to the Galileans generally. The Samaritans had believed without any miracle. The Galileans he said were less disposed to believe him than even they were. And though he had wrought miracles enough to convince them, yet unless they continually saw them, they would not believe.

49. *Come down, &c.* The earnestness

50 Jesus saith unto him, <sup>4</sup> Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

53 So the father knew that *it* was at the same <sup>5</sup> hour, in the which

<sup>4</sup> Matt. viii. 13. Mark vii. 29, 30. Luke xvii. 14.    <sup>5</sup> Psa. cviii. 20.

of the nobleman evinces the deep and tender anxiety of a father. So anxious was he for his son that he was not willing that Jesus should delay a moment, not even to address the people. He still seems to have supposed that Jesus had no power to heal his son except he was present with him.

50. *Go thy way.* This was a kind and tender address. It was designed to convince him that he could work a miracle though not personally present. ¶ *Thy son liveth.* Thy son shall recover. Or he shall be restored to health according to thy request. ¶ *The man believed.* The manner in which Jesus spoke, and the assurance he gave, convinced the man that he could heal his son there as well as by going to Capernaum. This is an instance of the power of Jesus to convince the mind, to soothe doubts, to confirm faith, and to meet our desires. He blesses not always in the manner in which we ask, but he grants us our main wish. The father wished his son healed by Jesus' going down to Capernaum. Jesus healed him, but not in the way in which he asked it to be done. God will hear our prayers, and grant our requests, but often not in the precise manner in which we ask it. It is his to judge of the best way of doing us good.

52. *The seventh hour.* About one o'clock in the afternoon.

53. *The same hour.* The very time when Jesus spoke. ¶ *The fever left him.*



Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, <sup>1</sup> and his whole house.

54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judæa into Galilee.

## CHAPTER V.

*The miracle at Bethesda, 1—9. The cavil of the Jews and Christ's reply, 10—17. Christ vindicates his reply*

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvi. 34; xviii. 8.

It seems that it left him suddenly and entirely; so much so, that they went to inform the father, and to comfort him; and also, doubtless, to apprise him that it was not necessary now to ask aid from Jesus. From this miracle we may learn, 1. That Jesus had an intimate knowledge of all things. He knew the case of this youth, the extent of his disease, where he was, and thus had power to heal him. 2. That Jesus had almighty power. Nothing else could have healed this child. Nor could it be pretended that the cure was effected by any natural means. Jesus was far away from him, and the youth knew not the source of the power that healed him. It could not be pretended that there was any collusion or jugglery. The father came in deep anxiety. The servants saw the cure. Jesus was at a distance. And all bears the marks of being the simple energy of God, put forth with equal ease to heal whether far or near. Thus he can save the sinner. 3. We see the benevolence of Jesus. Ever ready to aid, to heal, or to save, he may be called on at all times, and will not be called on in vain. ¶ *Himself believed.* This miracle removed all his doubts, and he became a real disciple and friend of Jesus. ¶ *His whole house.* His whole family. We may learn from this, 1. That sickness, or deep affliction, is often the means of great good. Here the sickness of the son resulted in the faith of all the family. God often takes away earthly blessings for a time, that he may impart rich spiritual mercies. 2. The father of a family may be the means of the salvation of his children. Here the effort of a parent resulted in the conversion of his children to Christ. 3. There is great beauty and propriety when sick-

*by the testimony borne to him by God, 18—30; by John, 31—35; by his own miracles, 36—38; and by the Old Testament scriptures, 39—47.*

**A**FTER this there was a <sup>2</sup> feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep <sup>3</sup> market a pool, <sup>4</sup> which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. ii. 13. Lev. xxiii. 2—8. Dent. xvi. 16. <sup>3</sup> Or gate. Neh. iii. 1; xii. 39. <sup>4</sup> Isa. xlii. 9, 12.

ness thus results in piety. For this purpose it is sent. God does not willingly grieve or afflict the children of men. And when afflictions terminate as this did, it will be cause of perfect joy and ceaseless praise. 4. There is a peculiar charm when piety thus comes into the families of the rich and the noble. It is so unusual; their example and influence go so far; it overcomes so many temptations, and affords opportunities of doing so much good, that there is no wonder that the evangelist selected this instance as one of the effects of the power and preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER V.

1. *A feast.* Probably the passover, though it is not certain. There were two other feasts, the pentecost, and the feast of tabernacles, at which all the males were required to be at Jerusalem; and it might have been one of them. It is of no consequence, however, which of them is intended.

2. *The sheep market.* This might have been rendered the sheep-gate, or the gate through which the sheep were taken into the city for sacrifice. The marginal rendering is gate; and the word market is not in the original; nor is a sheep market mentioned in the scriptures, or in any of the Jewish writings. A sheep-gate is repeatedly mentioned by Nehemiah, ch. iii. 1, 32; xii. 39, being that by which sheep and oxen were brought into the city. As these were brought mainly for sacrifice, the gate was doubtless near the temple, and near the present place which is shown as the pool of Bethesda. ¶ *A pool.* This word may either mean a small lake or pond in which one can swim; or a place

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, <sup>1</sup> of blind, halt,

<sup>1</sup> Kin. xiii. 4. Zech. xi. 17. Matt. xv. 30. Mark iii. 1—4. Luke vii. 22.

for fish; or any waters collected for bathing or washing. It refers here to a collection of waters having medicinal properties. ¶ *Hebrew tongue.* Hebrew language. The language then spoken which did not differ essentially from the ancient Hebrew. ¶ *Bethesda.* The house of mercy. It was so called on account of the strong healing properties of the water, the property of restoring health to the sick and infirm. ¶ *Five porches.* The word *porch* commonly means a covered place, surrounding a building in which people can walk or sit in hot or wet weather. Here it probably means that there were five covered places, or apartments in which the sick could remain, from each one of which they could have access to the water. A little to the north-east of the mosque of Omar, the ancient site of the temple, this place is still shown. It is covered, and the descent to it is by steps. There is at present no water in it, but there can be little doubt that this is the same place where the pool of Bethesda was in the time of the Saviour. It is one hundred and twenty feet long, forty broad, and eight deep; and at one end there are the remains of three or four arches which may be the ruins of the porches. In the time of Sandys, 1611, the spring was found running, but in small quantities; in the time of Maundrell, 1697, the stream did not run. Probably in his time, as now, the water which had formerly filtered through the rocks was dammed up by the rubbish.

3. *Impotent folk.* Sick people, or people who were weak and feeble by long disease. The word means those who were feeble, rather than those who were afflicted with acute disease. ¶ *Halt.* Lame. ¶ *Withered.* Those who were afflicted with one form of the palsy that withered or dried up the part affected. See Note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *Moving of the water.* It appears that this pool had medicinal properties only when it was agitated or moved. It is probable that at regular times or intervals the fountain put forth an unusual quantity of water, or water of peculiar properties, and that about these times the people assembled in multitudes who were to be healed.

withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a

4. *An angel.* It is not affirmed that the angel did this visibly, or that they saw him do it. They judged by the effect, and when they saw the waters agitated, they concluded that they had healing properties, and descended to them. The Jews and the sacred writers were in the habit of attributing all favours to the ministry of the angels of God. Gen. xix. 15. Matt. iv. 11; xviii. 10. Luke xvi. 22. Acts vii. 53; xii. 11. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. i. 14. This fountain, it seems, had strong medicinal properties. Like many other waters, it had the property of healing certain diseases that were incurable by any other means. Thus the waters of Bath, of Saratoga, &c., are found to be highly medicinal, and to heal diseases that are otherwise incurable. In the case of the waters of Bethesda, there does not appear to have been any thing miraculous; but the waters seem to have been endowed with strong medicinal properties, especially after a periodical agitation. All that is peculiar about them in the record is, that this was produced by the ministry of an angel. This was in accordance with the common sentiment of the Jews, the common doctrine of the Bible, and the belief of the sacred writers. Nor can it be shown to be absurd or improbable that such blessings should be imparted to man by the ministry of an angel. There is no more absurdity in the belief that a pure spirit, or holy angel, should aid man, than that a physician or parent should; and no more absurdity in supposing that the healing properties of such a fountain should be produced by his aid, than that any other blessing should be. Heb. i. 12. Who can prove that all his temporal blessings do not come to him through the medium of others, of parents, and teachers, and friends, and angels? And who can prove that it is unworthy the benevolence of angels to minister to the wants of the poor, and needy, and afflicted, when man does it, and Jesus Christ did it, and God himself does it daily? ¶ *Went down.* Descended to the pool. ¶ *At a certain season.* At a certain time. Periodically. They knew about the time when the angel came, and assembled in multitudes to partake of the benefits. Many multitudes  
OF

certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first <sup>1</sup> after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole <sup>2</sup> of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity <sup>3</sup> thirty and eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prov. viii. 17. Eccl. ix. 10. Matt. xi. 12.  
<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xlviii. 8, 9. Zec. xliii. 1. <sup>3</sup> Luke viii. 43; xliii. 16. <sup>4</sup> Psa. cxlii. 3.

springs are more strongly impregnated at some seasons of the year than others. ¶ *Troubled the waters.* Stirred, or agitated the water. There was either an increase, or a bubbling and agitation produced by the admission of a fresh quantity. ¶ *Whosoever then first.* This does not mean that but one was healed, and that the first one; but that those who first descended into the pool were healed. The strong medicinal properties of the waters soon subsided, and those who could not at first enter into them were obliged to wait for the return of the agitation. ¶ *Stepped in.* Went in. ¶ *Was made whole.* Was healed. It is not implied that this was done instantaneously, or by a miracle. The water had such properties that he was healed, though probably gradually. It is not less the gift of God to suppose that this fountain restored gradually, and in accordance with what commonly occurs, than to suppose what is not affirmed in this text, that it was done at once, and in a miraculous manner.

In regard to this passage, it should be remarked that the account of the angel in ver. 4 is wanting in many manuscripts, and has been by many supposed to be spurious. There is not conclusive evidence, however, that it is not a part of the genuine text; and the best critics suppose that it should not be rejected. One difficulty has been that no such place as this spring is mentioned by Josephus. But John is as good a historian, and as worthy to be believed as Josephus. Besides, it is known that many important places and events have not been mentioned by the Jewish historian, and it is no evidence that there was no such place as this, because he did not mention it. When this

knew that he had been now a long time in *that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have <sup>5</sup> no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down <sup>6</sup> before me.

<sup>5</sup> Deut. xxxii. 36. Psa. lxxli. 12; cxlii. 4. Rom. v. 6. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 4. 1 Cor. ix. 24.

fountain was discovered, or how long its healing properties continued to be known, is nowhere mentioned. All that we know of it is what is mentioned here, and conjecture would be useless. We may remark, however, that such a place is an evidence of the great goodness of God. Springs or fountains having healing properties abound on earth. Many are well known both in Europe and America. Diseases are often healed in such places that no human skill could remove. The Jews regarded such a provision as proof of the mercy of God. They gave this healing spring the name of a "house of mercy." They regarded it as under the care of an angel. And there is no place where man should be more sensible of the goodness of God, or be more disposed to render him praise than when at such a healing fountain. And yet how lamentable is it, that such places, watering places, should be mere places of gaiety, and thoughtlessness; of balls, and card-playing, and amusement! How melancholy that amidst the very places where there is most evidence of the goodness of God, and of the misery of the poor, the sick, the afflicted, men should forget all the goodness of their Maker, and spend their time in scenes of dissipation, and folly, and vice!

5. *An infirmity.* A weakness. We know not what his disease was. We know only that it disabled him from walking, and that it was of very long standing. It was doubtless regarded as incurable.

7. *Sir, I have no man, &c.* The answer of the man implied that he did wish it, but in addition to all his other trials, he had no friend to aid him. This is an additional circumstance that heightened his affliction.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, <sup>1</sup> take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on <sup>2</sup> the same day was the sabbath.

10 ¶ The Jews therefore said

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 6. Mark ii. 11. Luke v. 24.  
<sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 14. Matt. xii. 10—13.

8. *Rise, take up, &c.* Jesus not only restored him to health, but he gave evidence to those around him that this was a real miracle, and that the man was really healed. For almost forty years he had been afflicted. He was not even able to walk. Jesus commanded him not only to walk, but to take up his bed also and carry that as proof that he was truly made whole. In regard to this we may observe, 1. That it was a remarkable command. The poor man had been long infirm, and it does not appear that he expected to be healed except by being put into the waters. Yet Jesus, when he gives a commandment, can give strength to obey it. 2. It is our business to obey the commands of Jesus, however feeble we feel ourselves to be. His grace will be sufficient for us, and his burden will be light. 3. The weak and helpless sinner should put forth his efforts in obedience to the command of Jesus. Never was a sinner more helpless than was this man. If God gave him strength to do his will, he can give it to all others; and the plea that we can do nothing, could have been urged with far more propriety by this man than it can be by any impenitent sinner. 4. This narrative should not be abused. It should not be supposed as intended to teach that a sinner should delay repentance, as if waiting for God. The narrative teaches and implies no such thing. It is a simple record of a fact in regard to a man who had no power to heal himself, and who was under no obligation to heal himself. There is no reference in the narrative to the difficulties of a sinner, no intimation that it was intended to refer to his condition; and to make this example an excuse for delay, or an argument for waiting, is to abuse and pervert the Bible. Seldom is more mischief done, than by attempting to draw from the Bible what it was not intended to teach, and by an effort to make that convey spiritual instruction which God has

unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: <sup>3</sup> it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xxxi. 12—17. Neh. xiii. 15—22.  
Jer. xvii. 21—27. Matt. xii. 2—8.

not declared designed for that purpose. ¶ *Thy bed.* Thy couch; or the mattress, or clothes on which he lay.

9. *The sabbath.* To carry burdens on the sabbath was forbidden in the Old Testament. Exod. xx. 8—10. Neh. xiii. 15. Jer. xvii. 21. If it be asked then why Jesus commanded a man to do on the sabbath what was understood to be a violation of the day, it may be answered, 1. That the Son of man was Lord of the sabbath, and had a right to declare what might be done, and even to dispense with a positive law of the Jews. Ch. v. 17. Matt. xii. 8. 2. This was a poor man, and Jesus directed him to secure his property. 3. The Jews extended the obligation of the sabbath beyond what was intended by the appointment. They observed it superstitiously, and Jesus took every opportunity to convince them of their error, and to restore the proper observance of the day. Matt. xii. 6—12. Luke vi. 9; xiii. 14—16; xiv. 5. This method he took to show them what the law of God really permitted on that day, and that works of necessity and mercy were lawful.

10. *Not lawful.* It was forbidden, they supposed, in the Old Testament. The Jews were very strenuous in the observing the external duties of religion.

11. *He that made me whole.* The man reasoned correctly. If Jesus had power to work so signal a miracle, he had a right to explain the law. If he had conferred so great a favour on him, he had a right to expect obedience. And we may learn, that the mercy of God in pardoning our sins or in bestowing any signal blessing, imposes the obligation to obey him. We should yield obedience to him according to what we know to be his will, whatever may be the opinions of men, or whatever interpretation they may put on the law of God. Our business is a simple, hearty, child-like obedience, let the men of the world say or think of us as they choose.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

13 And he that was healed wist <sup>1</sup> not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed <sup>2</sup> himself away, <sup>3</sup> a multitude being in *that* place.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiv. 9.    <sup>2</sup> Luke iv. 30.    <sup>3</sup> Or, from the multitude that was.

12. *What man is he, &c.* In this verse there is a remarkable instance of the perverseness of men, of their want of candour, and of the manner in which they often look at a subject. Instead of looking at the miracle, and at the man's statement of the manner in which he was healed, they look only at what they thought to be a violation of the law. They assumed it as certain that nothing could make the conduct of Jesus proper; and they meditated vengeance, not only on the man who was carrying his bed, but on him also who had told him to carry it. Thus men often assume that a certain course, or opinion, is proper, and when any one differs from them they look only at the difference, but not at the reasons for it. One great source of dispute among men is that they look only at the points in which they differ, but are unwilling to listen to the reasons why others do not believe as they do. It is always enough to condemn one in the eyes of a bigot that another differs from him, and he looks upon him who holds a different opinion, as the Jews did at this man, as certainly wrong; and such a bigot looks at the reasons why others differ from him just as the Jews did at the reason why this man bore his bed on the sabbath, as not worth regarding, or hearing, or as if they could not possibly be right.

13. *Wist not.* Knew not. ¶ *Had conveyed himself away.* Was lost in the crowd. He had silently mingled with the multitude; and the man had been so rejoiced at his cure, that he had not even inquired the name of his benefactor.

14. *Findeth him.* Fell in with him, or saw him. ¶ *In the temple.* The man seems to have gone at once to the sanctuary, perhaps a privilege of which he had been long deprived. They who are recovered from sickness should seek the sanctuary

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin <sup>4</sup> no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

15 The man departed, <sup>5</sup> and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. <sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 11.    <sup>5</sup> Mark i. 45.    <sup>6</sup> Ch. ix. 15, 25, 30, 34.

of God and give him thanks for his mercy. There is nothing more improper when we are raised up from a bed of pain than to forget God, our benefactor, and neglect to praise Him for his mercies. ¶ *Thou art made whole.* Jesus calls to his remembrance the fact that he was healed, in order that he might admonish him not to sin again. ¶ *Sin no more.* By this expression it was implied that the infirmity of this man was caused by sin, perhaps by vice in his youth. His crime or dissipation had brought on him this long and distressing affliction. Jesus shows him that he knew the cause of his sickness, and takes occasion to warn him not to repeat it. No man who indulges in vice can tell what may be its consequences. Such indulgence must always end in evil, and not unfrequently it results in loss of health, and in long and painful disease. This is always the case with intemperance, and all gross pleasures. Sooner or later, sin will always result in misery. ¶ *Sin no more.* Do not repeat the vice. You have had dear-bought experience, and if vicious practices be again resorted to it will be worse. When a man has been restored from the effects of sin, he should learn to avoid the very appearance of evil. He should shun the place of temptation; he should not touch, nor taste, nor handle. God visits with heavier judgment those who have been once restored from the ways of sin, and who return again to it. The drunkard that has been reformed, and that returns to his habits of drinking, becomes more beastly; the man that professes to have experienced a change of heart, and then indulges in sin, sinks deeper into pollution, and is seldom restored. The only way of safety in all such cases is to *sin no more*; not to be in the way of temptation; not to expose ourselves; not to touch, or approach that which came near to working our ruin.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him,<sup>1</sup> because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

17 ¶ But Jesus answered them,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 19, 20; xv. 20. Acts ix. 4, 5.

The man who has been intemperate, and is reformed, if he tastes the poison at all, may expect to sink deeper than ever into drunkenness and pollution. ¶ *A worse thing.* A more grievous disease, or the pains of hell. "The doom of apostates is a worse thing than thirty-eight years' lameness." *Henry.*

16. *Persecuted Jesus.* They opposed him, attempted to ruin his character, to destroy his popularity, and probably held him up before the people as a violator of the law of God. Instead of making inquiry whether he had not given proof that he was the Messiah, they assumed that he must be wrong, and ought to be punished. Thus every bigot and persecutor does in regard to those who differ from him. ¶ *To slay.* To put to death. This they attempted to do because it was directed in the law of Moses. Exod. xxxi. 15; xxxv. 2. See Luke vi. 7, 11; xiii. 14. We see here: 1. How full of enmity, and how bloody, was the purpose of the Jews. All that Jesus had done was to restore an infirm man to health, a thing which they would have done for their cattle, Luke vi. 7; and yet they sought his life because he had done it for a sick man. 2. Men are often extremely envious because good is done by others, especially if it is not done according to the way of their denomination or party. 3. Here was an instance of the common feelings of a hypocrite. He often covers his enmity against the power of religion by great zeal for the form of it. He hates and persecutes those who do good, who seek the conversion of sinners, who love revivals of religion and the spread of the gospel, because it is not according to some matter of form which has been established, and on which he supposes the whole safety of the church to hang. There was nothing that Jesus was more opposed to than hypocrisy; and nothing that he set himself more against than those who suppose all goodness to consist in forms, and all piety in the Shibboleths of a party.

My<sup>2</sup> Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill<sup>3</sup> him, because he not only had broken the sabbath,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 4; xiv. 10. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 19—23.

17. *My father.* God. ¶ *Worketh hitherto.* Worketh until now, or till his time. God has not ceased to work on the sabbath. He makes the sun to rise, the stars to rise. He causes the grass, the tree, the flower, to grow. He has not suspended his operations on the sabbath; and the obligation to rest on the sabbath does not extend to him. He created the world in six days, and ceased the work of creation; but he has not ceased to govern on the sabbath, and to carry forward, by his providence, his great plans. ¶ *And I work.* As God does good on that day, as he is not bound by the law which requires his creatures to rest on that day; so I do the same. The law on that subject may be dispensed with also in my case, for the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath. In this reply Jesus implies that he was equal with God from two circumstances: 1. Because he called God his father, ver. 18. 2. Because he claimed the same exemption from law which God did; asserting that the law of the sabbath did not bind him or his Father, thus showing that he had a right to impose and repeal laws in the same manner as God. He that has a right to do this must be God.

18. *The more to kill him.* The answer of Jesus was fitted greatly to irritate them. He did not deny what he had done, but he added to that what he well knew would highly offend them. That he should claim the right of dispensing with the law, and affirm that, in regard to its observance, he was in the same condition with God, was eminently fitted to enrage them, and he doubtless knew that it might endanger his life. We may learn from his answers: 1. That we are not to keep back truth because it may endanger us. 2. That we are not to keep back truth because it will irritate and enrage sinners. The fault is not in the truth, but in the sinner. 3. That when any particular portion of truth enrages hypocrites, they will be enraged the more they hear of it. ¶ *Had broken the sabbath.* They supposed he had broken it. ¶ *Making him*

but said also that God was his Father, making <sup>1</sup> himself equal with God.

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>2</sup> The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 39, 33. Zech. xlii. 7. Phil. ii. 6.  
<sup>2</sup> Ver. 30.

*self equal with God.* This shows that, in the view of the Jews, the name Son of God, or calling God his Father, implied equality with God. The Jews were the best interpreters of the meaning of their own language, and as Jesus did not deny the correctness of their interpretations, it follows that he meant to be so understood. See ch. x. 29—38. The interpretation of the Jews was a very natural and just one. He not only said that God was his Father, but he said that he had the same right to work on the sabbath that God had; that by the same authority, and in the same manner, he could dispense with the obligation of the day. They had now two pretences for seeking to kill him; one for making himself equal with God, which they considered blasphemy; and the other for violating the sabbath. For each of these the law denounced death. Lev. xxiv. 11—14. Num. xv. 35.

19. *The Son can do nothing of himself.* Jesus having stated the extent of his authority, proceeds here to show its source and nature, and to prove to them that what he had said was true. The first explanation which he gives is in these words, *the Son*, whom he had just impliedly affirmed to be equal with God—did nothing of himself. That is, nothing without the appointment of the Father; nothing contrary to the Father, as he immediately explains it. When it is said that he *can do nothing of himself*, it is meant, that such is the union subsisting between the Father and the Son, that he can do nothing independently, or separate from the Father. Such is the nature of this union that he can do nothing which has not the concurrence of the Father, and which He does not command. In all things he must, from the necessity of his nature, act in accordance with the nature and will of God. Such is the intimacy of the union, that the fact that he does any-

seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

20 For <sup>3</sup> the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these. that ye may marvel.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. iii. 35; xvii. 26. Matt. xiii. 17.

thing is proof that it is by the concurring agency of God. There is no separate action, no separate existence, but in being and in action the most perfect oneness between him and the Father. Comp. ch. x. 30; xvii. 21. ¶ *What he seeth the Father do.* In the works of creation and providence; in making laws, and in the government of the universe. There is a peculiar force in the word *seeth* here. No man can see God acting in his works. But this implies that the Son sees him act, as we see our fellow men act; and that he has a knowledge of him, therefore, which no mere mortal could possess. ¶ *What things soever.* In the works of creation, providence, and in the government of the worlds. The word is without limit, all that the Father does the Son likewise does. This is as high an assertion as possible of his being equal with God. If one does all that another does or can do, then there is proof of equality. If the Son does all that the Father does, then, like him, he must be almighty, omniscient, all-present, and infinite in every perfection; or, in other words, he must be God. If he had this power, then he had authority also, to do on the sabbath-day what God did.

20. *The Father loveth the Son.* This authority he traces to the love which the Father has for him; that peculiar, ineffable, infinite love, which God has for his only-begotten Son, feebly and dimly illustrated by the love which an earthly parent has for an only child. ¶ *Sheweth him.* Makes him acquainted with. Conceals nothing from him. From us, and from apostles, prophets, and philosophers, no small part of the doings of God are concealed. From the Son nothing is. And as God shows him all that he does, he must be possessed of omniscience. For to no finite mind could be imparted a knowledge of all the works of God.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even <sup>1</sup> so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

22 For the Father judgeth no

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 25; xvii. 2. Luke viii. 54.

¶ *Will show him.* 'Will appoint and direct him to do greater works than these.' ¶ *Greater works than these.* Than healing the impotent man, and commanding him to carry his bed on the sabbath day. The greater works to which he refers are those which he proceeds to specify. He will raise the dead and judge the world, &c. ¶ *May marvel.* May wonder, or be amazed.

21. *As the Father raiseth up the dead.* God has power to raise the dead. By his power this had been done in at least two instances, by the prophet Elijah, in the case of the son of the widow of Sarepta, 1 Kin. xvii. 22; and by the prophet Elisha, in the case of the Shunamite's son. 2 Kin. iv. 32—35. The Jews did not doubt that God had power to raise the dead. Jesus here expressly affirms it, and says that he has the same power. ¶ *Quickeneth them.* Gives them life. This is the sense of the word *quickeneth* throughout the Bible. ¶ *Even so.* In the same manner. By the same authority and power. The power of raising the dead must be one of the highest attributes of the divinity. As Jesus affirms that he has the power in the same manner as the Father, so it follows that he must be equal with God. ¶ *The Son quickeneth.* Gives life to. This may either refer to his raising the dead from their graves, or giving spiritual life to those who are dead in trespasses and sins. The former he did in the case of Lazarus, and the widow's son at Nain. Ch. xi. 43, 44. Luke vii. 14, 15. The latter he did in the case of all those who were converted by his power, and still does it in any case of conversion. ¶ *Whom he will.* It was in the power of Jesus to raise up any of the dead as well as Lazarus. It depended on his will whether Lazarus and the widow's son should come to life. So it depends on his will whether sinners shall live. He has power to renew them, and the renewing of the heart is as much the result of his will as the raising of the dead.

man, but hath committed <sup>2</sup> all judgment unto the Son:

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xi. 27. Acts xvii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 10.

22. *Judgeth no man.* Jesus is in these verses showing his equality with God. He affirmed, ver. 17, that he had the same power over the sabbath that his Father had; in ver. 19, that he did the same things as the Father; in ver. 21, particularly that he had the same power to raise the dead. He now adds that God has given him the authority to judge men. The Father pronounces judgment on no one. This office he has committed to the Son. The power of judging the world implies ability to search the heart, and omniscience to understand the motives of all actions. This is a work which none but a divine being can do, and it shows, therefore, that the Son is equal to the Father. ¶ *Hath committed, &c.* Hath appointed him to be the judge of the world. In the previous verse he had said that he had power to raise the dead; he here adds that it will be his also to judge them when they are raised. See Matt. xxv. Acts xvii. 31.

23. *That all men should honour, &c.* To honour is to esteem, reverence, praise, do homage to. We honour one when we ascribe to him in our hearts, and words, and actions, the praise and obedience which are due to him. We honour God when we obey him and worship him aright. We honour the Son when we esteem him to be as he is; when we have right views and feelings towards him. As he is declared to be God, ch. i. 1, as he here says that he has power and authority equal with God, so we honour him when we regard him as such. The primitive Christians are described by Pliny, in a letter to the emperor Trajan, as meeting together to sing hymns to Christ as God. So we honour him aright when we regard him as possessed of wisdom, goodness, power, eternity, omniscience, equal with God. ¶ *Even as.* To the same extent; in the same manner. Since the Son is to be honoured even as the Father, it follows that he must be equal with the Father. To honour the Father must denote re-



the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He <sup>1</sup> that heareth my word,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iii. 16, 18, 36; vi. 40, 47. Rom. x. 11—13. 1 Pet. i. 21. 1 John v. 1, 11—13.

and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, <sup>2</sup> and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. x. 27—30. Rom. viii. 1, 16, 17, 28—30, 33, 34. 1 Thess. v. 9. 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. 1 John iii. 14.

giours homage, or the rendering of that honour which is due to God; so to honour the Son must also denote religious homage. If our Saviour here did not intend to teach that he ought to be worshipped, and to be esteemed as equal with God, it would be difficult to teach it by any language which could have been used. ¶ *He that honoureth not the Son.* He that does not believe on him, and render to him the homage which is his due as the equal of God. ¶ *Honoureth not the Father.* Does not worship and obey the Father, the first person of the Trinity, that is, does not worship God. He may imagine he worships God, but there is no God but the God subsisting as the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He that withholdeth proper homage from one, withholdeth it from all. He that should refuse to honour the Father, could not be said to honour God; and in the like manner, he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father. This appears further from the following considerations: 1. The Father wills that the Son should be honoured. He that refuses to do it disobeys the Father. 2. They are equal. He that denies the one, denies also the other. 3. The same feeling that leads us to honour the Father, will also lead us to honour the Son, for he is "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." Heb. i. 3. 4. The evidence of the existence of the Son is the same as that of the Father. He has the same wisdom, goodness, omnipresence, truth.

And from these verses we may learn: 1. That those who do not render proper homage to Jesus Christ, do not worship the true God. 2. There is no such God as the infidel professes to believe in. There can be but one God, and if the God of the Bible be the true God, then all other gods are false gods, and cannot save. 3. Those who withhold proper homage from Jesus Christ, who do not honour him even as they honour the Father, cannot be Christians. 4. One

evidence of piety is when we are willing to render proper praise and homage to Jesus Christ, to love him, and serve, and obey him, with all our hearts. 5. As a matter of fact, it may be added, that they who do not honour the Son, do not worship God at all. The infidel has no form of worship. He has no place of secret prayer, no temple of worship, no family altar. Who ever yet heard of an infidel that prayed? Where do such men build houses of worship? Where do they meet to praise God? Nowhere. As certainly as we hear the name infidel, we are certain at once that we hear the name of a man who has no form of religion in his family; who never prays in secret, and who will do nothing to maintain the public worship of God. Account for it as men may, it is a fact that no one can dispute, that it is only they who do honour to the Lord Jesus that have any form of the worship of God, or that honour him; and their veneration for God is just in proportion to their love for the Redeemer, just as they honour him.

24. *He that heareth my word.* To hear, in this place, evidently denotes not the outward act of hearing, but to receive in a proper manner; to suffer it to make its proper impression on the mind; to obey. The word *hear* is often used in this sense. Ch. viii. 47. Matt. xi. 15. Acts iii. 23. Many persons outwardly hear the gospel, who neither understand nor obey it. ¶ *My word.* My doctrine, my teaching. All that Jesus taught about himself, as well as about the Father. ¶ *On him that sent me.* On the Father, who in the plan of redemption, is represented as sending his Son to save men. See ch. iii. 17. Faith in God who sent his Son, is here represented as being connected with everlasting life. But there can be no faith in him who sent his Son, without faith also in him who is sent. The belief of one of the true doctrines of religion is connected with, and will lead to, the belief of all. ¶ *Hath everlasting life.* The state of man by nature is represent-

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead <sup>1</sup> shall hear the

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 28. Luke ix. 60; xv. 24, 32. Rom. vi. 4. Eph. ii. 1.

ed as death in sin. Eph. ii. 1. Religion is the opposite of this, or is life. The dead regard not any thing. They are unaffected by the cares, pleasures, amusements, of the world. They hear neither the voice of merriment, nor the tread of the living over their graves. So with sinners; they are unmoved with the things of religion. They hear not the voice of God, they see not his loveliness, they care not for his threatenings. But religion is life. The Christian lives with God, and feels and acts as if there was a God. Religion and its blessings, here and hereafter, are one and the same. The happiness of heaven is living unto God; being sensible of his presence, and glory, and power, and rejoicing in that. "There shall be no more death." Rev. xxi. 4. This life, or this religion, whether on earth or in heaven, is the same; the same joys extended and expanded for ever. Hence, when a man is converted, it is said that he has everlasting life; not merely shall have, but is already in possession of, that life or happiness which shall be everlasting. It is life begun, expanding, ripening to the skies. He has already entered in the inheritance; that inheritance which is everlasting. ¶ *Shall not come into condemnation.* He was by nature under condemnation. See ch. iii. 18. Here it is declared that he shall not return to that state, or he will not be again condemned. This promise is sure, it is made by the Son of God, and there is no one that can pluck them out of his hand. Ch. x. 28. ¶ *But is passed from death unto life.* Has passed over from a state of spiritual death to the life of the Christian. The word translated *passed*, would be better expressed by has *passed*. It implies that he has done it voluntarily; that none compelled him; and that the passage is made unto everlasting life. Because Christ is the author of this life in the soul, he is called the life, ch. i. 4; and as he has always existed, and is the source of all life, he is called the eternal life. 1 John v. 20.

25. *The hour.* The time. ¶ *Is com-*

voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath <sup>2</sup> life

<sup>2</sup> Exod. iii. 14. Psa. xxi. 9; xc. 2. Jer. x. 10. Acts xvii. 25.

*ing.* Under the preaching of the gospel, as well as in the resurrection of the dead.

¶ *Now is.* It is now taking place. Sinners were converted under his ministry, and brought to spiritual life. ¶ *The dead.* Either the dead in sins, or those that are in their graves. The words of the Saviour will apply to either. Language, in the scriptures, is often so used to describe two similar events. Thus the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world are described by Jesus in the same language, Matt. xxiv., xxv. The return of the Jews from Babylon, and the coming of the Messiah, and the spread of his gospel, are described in the same language by Isaiah. Isa. xl.—lxi. Compare Notes on Isa. vii. 14. The renewal of the heart, and the raising of the dead at the judgment, are here also described in similar language, because they so far resemble each other, that the same language will apply to both. ¶ *The voice of the Son of God.* The voice is that by which we give command. Jesus raised up the dead by his command, or by his authority. When he did it he spoke, or commanded it to be done. Mark v. 41: "He took the damsel by the hand, and said, Talitha-cumi." Luke vii. 14: "And he came and touched the bier, and said, Young man, I say unto thee, arise." Ch. xi. 43: "He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." So it is by his command that those who are dead in sins are quickened, or made alive. Ver. 21. And so at the day of judgment the dead will be raised by his command or voice, though there is no reason to think that his voice will be audibly heard. Ver. 28. ¶ *Shall live.* Shall be restored to life.

26. *As the Father hath life.* God is the source of all life. He is thence called the living God, in opposition to idols, which have no life. Acts xiv. 15. "We preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities (idols) unto the living God." Josh. iii. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 26. Jer. x. 10. See also Isa. xl. 18—31. ¶ *In himself.* This means, that life in God, or existence, is not derived from any other being. Our life is derived from God.

in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life<sup>1</sup> in himself;

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 4; iv. 10; vii. 37, 40; xi. 26. 1 Cor. xv. 45. Col. iii. 2, 4. 1 John i. 1—2. Rev. vii. 17; xxi. 6; xxii. 1, 17.

Gen. ii. 7: God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul," i. e. a living being. All other creatures derive their life from him. Psa. civ. 20, 29, 30: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." But God is undervived. He always existed as he is. Psa. xc. 2: "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." He is unchangeably the same. Jas. i. 17. It cannot be said that he was self-existent, because that is an absurdity. No being can originate or create himself. But he is not dependant on any other for life. Of course, no being can take away his existence; and of course, also, no being can take away his happiness. He has in himself infinite sources of happiness; and no other being, no change in his universe, can destroy that happiness. ¶ So. In a manner like his. It corresponds to the first *as*, implying that one is the same as the other; life in the one is the same, and possessed in the same manner, as in the other. ¶ *Hath he given.* This shows that the power or authority here spoken of was given, or committed to the Lord Jesus. This evidently does not refer to the manner in which the second person in the Trinity exists; for the power and authority of which Christ here speaks is that which he exercises as Mediator. It is the power of raising the dead and judging the world. In regard to his divine nature, it is not affirmed here that it is in any manner derived. Nor does the fact that God is said to have given him this power prove that he was inferior in his nature, or that his existence was derived. For, 1. It has reference merely to office. As Mediator, he may be said to have been appointed by the Father. 2. Appointment to office does not prove that the one who is appointed is inferior in nature to him who appoints him. A son may be appointed to a particular work by a parent, and yet, in regard to talents and every other qualification, may be equal or superior to the father. He sustains the relation of a son,

27 And hath given him authority<sup>2</sup> to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 22. Psa. ii. 6—9; ex. 1, 2, 6. Acts 42. Eph. i. 20—22.

and in this relation there is an official inferiority. General Washington was not inferior in nature and talents to the men who commissioned him. He simply derived authority from them to do what he was otherwise fully able to do. So the Son, as Mediator, is subject to the Father; yet this proves nothing about his nature. ¶ *To have life.* That is, the right or authority of imparting life to others, whether dead in their graves or in their sins. ¶ *In himself.* There is much that is remarkable in this expression. It is him as it is in God. He has the control of it, and can exercise it as he will. The prophets and apostles are never represented as having such power in themselves. They were dependant; they performed miracles in the name of God, and of Jesus Christ. Acts iii. 6; iv. 30; xvi. 18. But Jesus did it by his own name, authority, and power. He had but to speak and it was done. Ch. xi. 43. Mark v. 41. Luke vii. 14. This wonderful commission he bore from God to raise up the dead as he pleased, to convert sinners when and where he pleased, and finally to raise up all the dead, and pronounce on them an eternal doom according to the deeds done in the body. None could do this but he who had the power of creation, who was equal in power to the Father; and who had the power of searching all hearts, being equal in omniscience to God.

27. *Hath given him authority.* Hath appointed him to do this. Hath sent him to be judge of all. This is represented as being the appointment of the Father. Acts xvii. 31. The word *authority*, here (commonly rendered *power*) implies all that is necessary to execute judgment; all the physical power to raise the dead, and to investigate the motives and thoughts of the life; and all the moral right or authority to sit in judgment on the creatures of God, and pronounce their doom. ¶ *To execute judgment.* To do judgment; that is, to judge. He has appointment to do justice, and to see that the universe

28 Marvel not at this: <sup>1</sup> for the our is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear its voice,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 39, 40; xi. 25. Hos. xlii. 14. 1 Cor. v. 22, 42—54.

Wrong, either by the escape of the dirty, or by the punishment of the innocent. ¶ *Because he is the Son of man.* The phrase *Son of man* here, seems to be used in the sense of "because he is a man," or because he has human nature. Jesus often uses the phrase in relation to himself, to show his union to man, and a interest in man. See Note, Matt. ii. 19, 20. It is remarked here that the word *son* has not the article before it in the original. Because he is a son of man; i. e., because he is a man. It would seem, from this, that there is a propriety that one in our nature should judge us. What this propriety is, we do not certainly know. It may be, 1. Because it is proper that one who has experienced our infirmities, and who possesses our nature, may be supposed by those who are judged to be better qualified than one in a different nature. 2. Because it is to decide between man and God, and it is proper that our feelings and nature, and views, should be represented in the judge, as well as those of God. 3. Because Jesus has all the feelings of compassion we could ask, all the love we could desire in a judge; because he has shown his disposition to defend us by giving his life, and it can never be alleged by those who are condemned that their judge was a distant, cold, and unfriendly being. Some have supposed that the expression, *Son of man*, here, means the same as Messiah, see Dan. ix. 13, 14; and that the meaning is, that God hath made him judge because he is the Messiah. Some of the ancient fathers and fathers connected this with the following verse, thus: "Marvel not because I am a man, or because this great work is committed to a man apparently a humble life. You shall see greater things than these." Thus the Syriac version reads it; and Chrysostom, Theophylact, and some others among the fathers.

\*28. *Marvel not.* Do not wonder, or be astonished at this. ¶ *The hour is coming.*

29 And shall come forth; they that <sup>2</sup> have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that

<sup>2</sup> Dan. xii. 2. Matt. xxv. 31—46. Acts xlii. 16. 2 Cor. v. 10.

The time is approaching, or will be. ¶ *All that are in the graves.* All the dead, of every age and nation. They are described as *in the graves*, though many have turned to their native dust, and perished from human view, yet God sees them, and can regather their remains and raise them up to life. The phrase, *all that are in the graves*, does not prove that the same particles of matter shall be raised up, but it is equivalent to saying, all the dead. See Notes on 1 Cor. xv. 35—38. ¶ *Shall hear his voice.* He will restore them to life, and command them to appear before him. This is a most sublime description, and this will be a wonderful display of almighty power. None but God can see all the dead, none but he could remould their frames, and none else could command them to return to life.

29. *Shall come forth.* Shall come out of their graves. This was the language which he used when he raised up Lazarus. Ch. xi. 43, 44. ¶ *They that have done good.* That is, they who are righteous, or they who have, by their good works, shown that they were the friends of Christ. See Matt. xxv. 34—36. ¶ *Resurrection of life.* Religion is often called life, and everlasting life. See Note, ver. 24. In the resurrection, the righteous shall be raised up to the full enjoyment and perpetual security of that life. It is also called the resurrection of life, because there shall be no more death. Rev. xxi. 4. The enjoyment of God himself and of his works, of the society of angels and of the redeemed, and a freedom from sickness, and sin, and dying, shall constitute the life of the just in the resurrection. The resurrection is also called the resurrection of the just, Luke xiv. 14; and the first resurrection. Rev. xx. 5, 6. ¶ *The resurrection of damnation.* The word *damnation* means the sentence passed on one by a judge, judgment, or condemnation. The word, as we use it, applies only to the judgment pronounced by God on the wicked. But this is not its meaning always in the bible. Here it has, how-

have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.<sup>1</sup>

30 I<sup>2</sup> can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; <sup>3</sup> because I

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxv. 46. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 19; ch. viii. 28, 42; xiv. 10. <sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 15, 16. Gen. xviii. 25. Rom. ii. 2-5.

ever, that meaning. Those who have done evil shall be raised up to be condemned or damned. This shall be the object in raising them up; this the sole design. It is elsewhere said that they shall then be condemned to everlasting punishment, Matt. xxv. 46, and that they shall be punished with everlasting destruction. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. And it is said of the unjust that they are reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished. 2 Pet. ii. 9. That this refers to the future judgment, to the resurrection, and not to any thing that takes place in this life, is clear from the following considerations: 1. Jesus had just spoken of what would be done in this life, of the power of the gospel. Ver. 25. He adds here that something still more wonderful, something beyond this, should take place. All that are in the graves shall hear his voice. 2. He speaks of those who are in their graves, evidently referring to the dead. Sinners are sometimes said to be dead in sin, but sinners are not said to be in a grave. This is applied in the scriptures only to those who are deceased. 3. The language used here of the righteous cannot be applied to anything in this life. When God converts men, it is not because they have been good. 4. Nor is the language employed of the evil applicable to any thing here. In what condition among men can it be said, with any appearance of sense, that the wicked are brought forth from their graves to the resurrection of damnation? The doctrine of those universalists who hold that all men will be saved immediately at death, cannot be true. This passage proves that at the day of judgment the wicked will be condemned. Let it be added that if then condemned, they will be lost for ever. Thus, Matt. xxv. 46, it is said to be everlasting punishment. 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, it is called everlasting destruction. There is no account of redemption in hell, no Saviour, no Holy Spirit, no offer of mercy there.

seek not mine own will, but the will<sup>4</sup> of the Father which hath sent me.

31 If I bear witness<sup>5</sup> of myself, my witness is not true.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. iv. 34; vi. 38. Psa. xl. 7, 8. Matt. xvi. 39. <sup>5</sup> Ch. viii. 14. Prov. xxvii. 2. Rev. iii. 14.

30. *Of mine own self.* See ver. 19. The Messiah, the Mediator, does nothing without the concurrence and the authority of God. Such is the nature of the union subsisting between them that he does nothing independently of God. Whatever he does, he does according to the will of God. ¶ *As I hear I judge.* To hear, expresses the condition of one who is commissioned or instructed. Thus, ch. viii. 26, "I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him." Ver. 28: "As the Father hath taught me, I speak those things." Jesus here represents himself as commissioned, taught, or sent of God. When he says, *as I hear*, he refers to those things which the Father had showed him. Ver. 20. That is, he came to communicate the will of God, to show to man what God wished man to know. ¶ *I judge.* I determine, or decide. This was true respecting the institutions and doctrines of religion, and it will be true respecting the sentence he will pass on all mankind at the day of judgment. He will decide on their destiny according to what the Father wills and wishes, that is, according to justice. ¶ *Because I seek, &c.* This does not imply that his own judgment would be wrong if he sought his own will, but that he had no private ends, no selfish views, no improper bias. He came not to aggrandize himself, or promote his own views, but he came to do the will of God. Of course his decision would be impartial and unbiassed, and there is every security that it will be according to truth. See Luke xxii. 42, where he gave a memorable instance, in the agony of the garden, of his submission to his Father's will.

31. *If I bear witness of myself.* If I have no other evidence than my own testimony about myself. ¶ *My witness.* My testimony, my evidence; the proof would not be decisive. ¶ *Is not true.* The word *true* here means worthy of belief, or established by suitable evidence.

32 ¶ There is another<sup>1</sup> that bear-eth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witness-eth of me is true.

33 Ye sent unto John, and<sup>2</sup> he bare witness unto the truth.

34 But I receive not testimony

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 18. Acts x. 43. 1 John v. 7-9.  
<sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 7, 32.

See Matt. xxii. 16: "We know that thou art true," i. e., worthy of confidence, sent from God. Ch. viii. 13, 17. Luke xx. 21. The law did not admit a man to testify in his own case. The law of Moses required two witnesses. Deut. xvii. 6. Though what Jesus said was true, ch. viii. 13, 17, yet he admitted it was not sufficient testimony alone to claim their belief. They had a right to expect that his statement would be confirmed by other evidence that he came from God. This evidence he gave in the miracles which he wrought as proof that God had sent him.

32. *There is another.* That is, God. See ver. 36, 37.

33. *Ye sent unto John.* See ch. i. 19. ¶ *He bare witness,* &c. See ch. i. 26, 29, 36. This testimony of John ought to have satisfied them. John was an eminent man, many of the Pharisees believed on him; he was candid, unambitious, sincere, and his evidence was impartial and satisfactory. On this Jesus might have rested the proof that he was the Messiah, but he was willing also to adduce evidence of a higher order.

34. *I receive not testimony from men.* I do not depend for proof of my Messiahship on the testimony of men; nor do I pride myself on the commendations or flattery of men. ¶ *But these things,* &c. This testimony of John I adduce that you might be convinced. It was evidence of your own seeking. It was clear, full, explicit. You sent to make inquiry, and he gave you a candid and satisfactory answer. Had you believed that, you would have believed in the Messiah, and been saved. Men are often dissatisfied with the very evidence of the truth of religion which they sought, and on which they professed themselves willing to rely.

35. *He was.* It is probable that John had been cast into prison before this. Hence his public ministry had ceased,

from man: but<sup>3</sup> these things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing<sup>4</sup> for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 ¶ But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the<sup>5</sup> works

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xx. 31. Rom. iii. 2. <sup>4</sup> Matt. xxi. 28. Mark vi. 20. <sup>5</sup> Ch. x. 25; xv. 24. Acts ii. 22.

and our Saviour says he was such a light. ¶ *Light.* The word in the original properly means a lamp, and is not the same word which in ch. i. 4, 5, is translated light. That is a word commonly applied to the sun, the fountain of light; this means a lamp, or a light that is lit up or kindled artificially, from oil or tallow. A teacher is often called a light, because he guides or illuminates the minds of others. Rom. ii. 19. "Thou art confident that thou art a guide to the blind, a light to them that sit in darkness." Ch. viii. 12; xii. 46. Matt. v. 14. ¶ *A burning.* A lamp lit up, that burns with a steady lustre. ¶ *Shining.* Not dim, not indistinct. The expression means that he was an eminent teacher; that his doctrines were clear, distinct, consistent. ¶ *Ye were willing.* You willed, or you chose. You went out voluntarily. This shows that some of those whom Jesus was now addressing were among the great multitudes of Pharisees that came unto John in the wilderness. Matt. iii. 7. As they had at one time admitted John to be a prophet, so Jesus might with great propriety adduce his testimony in his favour. ¶ *For a season.* In the original, *for an hour*, denoting only a short time. They did it, as many others do, while he was popular, and it was the fashion to follow him. ¶ *To rejoice in his light.* To rejoice in his doctrines, and in admitting that he was a distinguished prophet; perhaps, also, to rejoice that he professed to be sent to introduce the Messiah, until they found that he bore testimony to Jesus of Nazareth.

36. *Greater witness.* Stronger, more decisive evidence. ¶ *The works.* The miracles, healing the sick, and raising the dead. ¶ *Hath given me.* Hath committed to me, or appointed me to do. Certain things he entrusted in his hands to accomplish. ¶ *To finish.* To do or to

which the Father hath given me to finish,<sup>1</sup> the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

37 And the Father<sup>2</sup> himself,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 4. <sup>2</sup> Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5.

perform, until the task is completed. The word is applied to the termination of anything, as we say a task is ended, or a work is completed. So Jesus said when he expired, "It is finished." Ch. xix. 30. From this it appears that Jesus came to *finish* a certain work; and hence we see the reason why he so often guarded his life, and sought his safety, until the task was fully accomplished. Those works or miracles bore witness of him; that is, showed that he was sent from God, because none but God could perform them, and because God would not give the power to any whose life and doctrines he did not approve. They were more decisive proof than the testimony of John, because, 1. John worked no miracles. Ch. x. 41. 2. This was a direct and undeniable testimony from God. It was possible that a man might be deceived or be an impostor. It was not possible for God to deceive. 3. The miracles which Jesus wrought were such as no man could work, and no angel. He that could raise the dead must have all power, and he who commissioned Jesus, therefore, must be God.

37. *The Father himself—hath borne witness of me.* This God had done. 1. By the miracles which Jesus had wrought, and of which he was conversing. 2. At the baptism of Jesus, where he said, "This is my beloved Son." Matt. iii. 17. 3. In the prophecies of the Old Testament. It is not easy to say here to which of these he refers. Perhaps he has reference to all. ¶ *Ye have neither heard his voice.* This difficult passage has been interpreted in various ways. The main design of it seems to be clear, to reprove the Jews for not believing the evidence that he was the Messiah. In doing this, he says that they were indisposed to listen to the testimony of God. He affirmed that God had given sufficient evidence of his divine mission, but they had disregarded it. The first thing that he notices is, that they had not heard his voice. The word *hear*, in this place, is

which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye<sup>3</sup> have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xiv. 9; xv. 24. Exod. xx. 18. Deut. iv. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

to be understood in the sense of obey, or listen to. See Note on ver. 23. The voice of God means his commands, or his declarations, however made; and the Saviour said that it had been the characteristic of the Jews, that they had not listened to the voice or command of God. As this had been their general characteristic, it was not wonderful that they disregarded now his testimony that he was the Messiah. The voice of God had been literally heard on the mount. See Deut. iv. 12. "Ye heard the voice of the words." ¶ *At any time.* This has been the uniform characteristic of the nation, that they have disregarded and perverted the testimony of God, and it was as true of that generation as of their fathers. ¶ *Nor seen his shape.* No man hath seen God at any time. Ch. i. 18. But the word *shape*, here, does not mean God himself. It refers to the visible manifestation of himself; to the appearance which he assumed. It is applied in the Septuagint to his manifesting himself to Moses. Num. xii. 8: "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently," in the Greek, in a form, or shape; the word used here. It is applied to the visible symbol of God that appeared in the cloud, and that rested on the tabernacle. Num. ix. 15, 16. It is the same word that is applied to the Holy Spirit appearing in bodily shape like a dove. Luke iii. 22. Jesus does not here deny that God had appeared in this manner; but he says they had not seen, i. e., had not paid attention to, or regarded the appearance of God. He had manifested himself, but they disregarded it, and in particular they had disregarded his manifestations in attestation of the Messiah. As the word *hear* means to obey, to listen to, so the word *see* means to pay attention to, to regard. 1 John iii. 6; 3 John 11; and thus throws light on ch. xiv. 9: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." I am a manifestation of God, God appearing in human flesh as he appeared for-

38 And ye have not his word<sup>1</sup> abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

39 ¶ Search<sup>2</sup> the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eter-

<sup>1</sup> 1 John ii. 14.    <sup>2</sup> Deut. xl. 18—20; xvii. 18, 19. Isa. viii. 20; xxxiv. 16. Luke xvi. 29.

merly in the symbol of the cloud; and he that regards me, or attends to me, regards the Father.

38. *His word abiding in you.* His law does not abide in you; that is, you do not regard or obey it. This was the third thing that he charged them with. 1. They had not obeyed the command of God. 2. They had not regarded his manifestations either in the times of the old dispensation, or now through the Messiah. 3. They did not yield to what he had said in the revelation of the Old Testament. ¶ *For whom he hath sent.* God had foretold that the Messiah would come. He had given evidence that Jesus was he. But now they rejected him, and this was proof that they did not regard the word of God.

39. *Search the scriptures.* The word translated *search* here, means to search diligently or anxiously. It is applied to miners, who search for precious metals; who look anxiously for the bed of the ore, with an intensity or anxiety proportionate to their sense of the value of the metal. It is applied by Homer to a lioness robbed of her whelps, and who searches the plain to trace out the footsteps of the man who has robbed her. It is also applied by him to dogs tracing their game by searching them out by the scent of the foot. It means a diligent, faithful, anxious investigation. The word may be either in the indicative or imperative mood. In our translation it is in the imperative, as if Jesus commanded them to search the scriptures. But it is probable that he meant merely to say that they did search the scriptures, expecting to find in them eternal life. There is abundant evidence that the Jews did search the books of the Old Testament. ¶ *The scriptures.* The writings or books of the Old Testament, for those were all the books of revelation that they then possessed. ¶ *In them ye think ye have eternal life.* The meaning of this is: Ye think that by studying the scriptures

nal life: and they are<sup>3</sup> they which testify of me.

40 And ye will not come<sup>4</sup> to me, that ye might have life.

41 I receive not honour from<sup>5</sup> men.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxiv. 37. 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. 4 Ch. iii. 19. 5 Ver. 34. 1 Thess. ii. 6.

you will obtain eternal life. You suppose that they teach the way to future blessedness, and that by diligently studying them you will attain it. We see by this, 1. That the Jews in the time of Jesus were expecting a future state. 2. The scriptures teach the way of life, and it is our duty to study them. The Bereans are commended for searching the scriptures, Acts xvii. 11; and Timothy is said from a child to have "known the holy scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation." 2 Tim. iii. 15. Early life is the proper time to search the bible; for they who seek the Lord early, shall find him. ¶ *They are they, &c.* They bear witness to the Messiah. They predict his coming, and the manner of his life and death. Isa. liii. Dan. ix. 26, 27, &c. See Note, Luke xxiv. 27.

40. *And ye will not come, &c.* Though the Old Testament bears evidence that I am the Messiah; though you professedly search it to learn the way to life; and though my works prove it, yet you will not come to me to obtain life. From this we may learn: 1. That life is to be obtained in Christ. He is the way, the truth, and the life, and he only can save us. 2. That in order to be saved, we must come to him, i. e., must come in the way appointed, as lost sinners, and be willing to be saved by him alone. 3. That the reason why sinners are not saved lies in the will. "The only reason why sinners die is because they will not come to Christ for life and happiness; it is not because they cannot, but because they will not."—(Henry.) 4. Sinners have a particular opposition to going to Jesus Christ for eternal life. They would prefer any other way, and it is commonly not until all other means are tried that they are willing to submit to him.

41, 42. *I receive not honour, &c.* I do not say these things because I am desirous of human applause, but to account for the fact that you do not believe on me, which is that you have not the love or



42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

44 How can ye believe, which<sup>1</sup> receive honour one of another, and

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 43. Matt. xxiii. 5. Gal. v. 19—21. Phil. ii. 3.

God in you. In this passage we see: 1. That we should not seek for human applause. It is of very little value, and it often keeps men from the approbation of God. Ver. 44. 2. They who will not believe on Jesus Christ, give evidence that they have no love for God. 3. The reason why they do not believe on him is because they have no regard for his character, wishes, or law. ¶ *Love of God.* Love to God. ¶ *In you.* In your hearts. You do not love God.

43. *In my Father's name.* By the authority of God; or giving proof that I am sent by him. ¶ *In his own name.* A false teacher setting up himself, and not even pretending to have a divine commission. The Jews were much accustomed to receive and follow particular teachers. In the time of Christ, they were greatly divided between the schools of Hillel and Shammai, two famous teachers. ¶ *Ye will receive.* You will follow, or obey as a teacher.

44. *Which receive honour one of another.* Who are studious of praise, and live for pride, ambition, and vain glory. This desire Jesus says was the great reason why they would not believe on him. They were unwilling to renounce their worldly honours and seek one so humble and unostentatious as he was. They expected a Messiah of pomp and splendour, and would not submit to one so despised, and of so lowly a rank. Had the Messiah come, as they expected, with pomp and power, it would have been an honour in their view to follow him; as it was, they despised and rejected him. The great reason why multitudes do not believe, is their attachment to human honours, their pride, and vanity, and ambition. That is so strong that while it continues they cannot and will not believe. They might, however, renounce that, and then the

seek<sup>2</sup> not the honour that cometh from God only?

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

46 For had ye believed Moses,

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30. 2 Chron. vi. 8. Luke xix. 17. Rom. ii. 19. Rom. ii. 12.

obstacle being removed, they would believe. Learn, 1. A man cannot believe the gospel while he is wholly under the influence of ambition. The two are not compatible. The religion of the gospel is humility; and a man who has not that cannot be a Christian. 2. Great numbers are deterred from being Christians by pride and ambition. Probably there is no single thing that prevents so many young men from becoming Christians as this passion. The proud and ambitious heart refuses to bow to the humiliating terms of the gospel. 3. Though while a man is under this governing principle he cannot believe the gospel, yet this proves nothing about his ability to lay that aside and to yield to truth. That is another question. A child cannot open a trunk when he gets on the lid and attempts to raise his own weight and the cover of the trunk too; but that settles nothing about the inquiry whether he might not get off and then open it. The true question is, whether a man can, or cannot, lay aside his ambition and pride, and about that there ought not to be any dispute. No one doubts that it may be done; and if that can be done, he can become a Christian. ¶ *Seek not the honour.* The praise, the glory, the approbation of God. The honour which comes from men is their praise, flattery, commendation; the honour that cometh from God is his approbation for doing his will. God alone can confer the honours of heaven, the reward of having done our duty here. That we should seek, and if we seek that, we shall come to Christ, who is the way and the life.

45, 46. *That I will accuse you.* Do not suppose that I intend to follow your example and accuse you. They had accused Jesus of breaking the law of God. Ver. 16. Jesus says that he will

ye would have believed me: for he wrote <sup>1</sup> of me.

47 But if ye <sup>2</sup> believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

## CHAPTER VI.

*The five thousand fed, 1—14. Christ retires from publicity, 15. Miracle of walking on the sea, 16—21. Many seek after Christ and come to him, 22—25. Christ the bread of life, 26—59. Many offended at his teaching, 60—65. The twelve are faithful, 66—69; except Judas, 70, 71.*

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 15; xxii. 18. Deut. xviii. 15, 18. Acts xxvi. 22. <sup>2</sup> Luke xvi. 31.

not imitate their example, though he implies that he might accuse them. ¶ *To the Father.* To God. ¶ *There is one that accuseth you.* Moses might be said to accuse or reprove them. He wrote of the Messiah; clearly foretold his coming; and commanded them to hear him. As they did not do it, it might be said that they had disregarded his command; and as Moses was divinely commissioned and had a right to be obeyed, so his command reproved them; they were disobedient and rebellious. ¶ *He wrote of me.* He wrote of the Messiah, and I am the Messiah. Gen. iii. 15; xii. 3. Compare ch. viii. 56. Gen. xlix. 10. Deut. xviii. 15.

47. *If ye believe not his writings.* If you do not credit what he has written, which you profess to believe, it is not to be expected that you will believe my declarations. And from this we may learn: 1. That many men who profess to believe the bible have really no regard for it when it crosses their own views and inclinations. 2. It is our duty to study the bible, that we may be established in the belief that Jesus is the Messiah. 3. The prophecies of the Old Testament are conclusive proofs of the truth of the christian religion. 4. He that rejects one part of the bible, will, for the same reason, reject all. 5. The Saviour acknowledged the truth of the writings of Moses, built his religion upon them, appealed to them to prove that he was the Messiah, and commanded men to search them. We have the authority of Jesus, therefore, that the Old Testament is a revelation from God.

**A**FTER <sup>3</sup> these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the <sup>4</sup> passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 ¶ When Jesus then lifted up

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xiv. 15—21. Mark vi. 34—44. Luke ix. 12—17. <sup>4</sup> Exod. xii. 3—17.

He that rejects his authority on this subject, might reject him altogether; and it is vain for any man to profess to believe in the New Testament, or in the Lord Jesus, without also acknowledging the authority of the Old Testament and of Moses.

We have in this chapter an instance of the profound and masterly manner in which Jesus could meet and silence his enemies. There is not any where a more conclusive argument, or a more triumphant meeting of the charges which the Jews had brought against him. No one can read this without being struck with his profound wisdom; and it is scarcely possible to conceive that there could be a more distinct declaration and proof that he was equal with God.

## CHAPTER VI.

1. *Jesus went over.* Went to the east side of the sea. The place to which he went was Bethsaida. Luke ix. 10. The account of this miracle of feeding the five thousand is recorded also in Matt. xiv. 13—21. Mark vi. 32—44. Luke ix. 10—17. John has added a few circumstances omitted by the other evangelists.

2. *Because they saw the miracle, &c.* They saw that he had the power to supply their wants, and they therefore followed him. See ver. 26. See also Matt. xiv. 14.

4. *The passover.* See Note, Matt. xxvi. 2, 17. ¶ *A feast of the Jews.* This is one of the circumstances of explanation thrown in by John, which show that he wrote for those who were unacquainted with jewish customs.

his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6 And this he said to prove him: <sup>1</sup> for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Philip answered him, Two <sup>2</sup> hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley-loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xlii. 1. Deut. viii. 2, 16. 2 Chron. xxxli. 31. <sup>2</sup> Num. xi. 21, 22. 2 Kin. iv. 43. Mark vi. 37.

6. *To prove him.* To try him, to see if he had faith, or if he would show that he believed that Jesus had power to supply them.

12. *Gather up the fragments.* This command is omitted by the other evangelists. It shows the care of Jesus that there should be no waste. Though he had power to provide any quantity of food, yet he taught us that the bounties of Providence are not to be squandered. In all things our Saviour set us an example of frugality, though he had an infinite supply at his disposal; and was himself economical, though he was Lord of all. If he was thus saving, it becomes us dependent creatures not to waste the bounties of a beneficent Providence. And it especially becomes the rich not to squander the bounties of Providence. They often feel that they are rich. They have enough. They have no fear of want; and they do not feel the necessity of studying economy. Yet let them remember that what they have is the gift of God, just as cer-

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, <sup>3</sup> he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing <sup>4</sup> be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that <sup>5</sup> prophet that should come into the world.

15 ¶ When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and

<sup>3</sup> Neh. ix. 25. Matt. xiv. 20, 21; xv. 37, 38. <sup>4</sup> Noh. viii. 10. Prov. xviii. 9. Luke xv. 12. <sup>5</sup> Gen. xlix. 10. Deut. xviii. 15—18.

tainly as the loaves and fishes created by the Saviour were his gift. It is not given them to waste, nor to spend in riot, nor to be the means of injuring their health, or of shortening life. It is given to sustain life, to excite gratitude, to fit for the active service of God. Every thing should be applied to its appropriate end, and nothing should be squandered or lost.

14. *That prophet, &c. The Messiah.* The power to work the miracle, and the benevolence manifested in it, showed that he was the long-expected Messiah.

15. *When Jesus perceived, &c. They* were satisfied by the miracle that he was the Messiah. They supposed that the Messiah was to be a temporal prince. They saw that Jesus was retiring, unambitious, and indisposed to assume the ensigns of office. They thought, therefore, that they would proclaim him as their long-expected king, and constrain him to assume the character and titles of an earthly prince. Men often attempt to dictate to God, and suppose that they un-

take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

16 And <sup>1</sup> when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose <sup>2</sup> by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiv. 23. Mark vi. 47—51. <sup>2</sup> Psal. cvii. 25.

derstand what is right better than he does. Men are fond of pomp and power, but Jesus sought retirement, and evinced profound humility. Though he had claims to the honour and gratitude of the nation, yet he sought them not in this way; nor did it evince a proper spirit in his followers when they sought to advance him to a place of external splendour and regal authority.

16—21. See this miracle of walking on the sea explained in the Notes on Matt. xiv. 22—33. Mark vi. 45—52.

21. *Immediately.* Quickly. Before a long time. How far they were from the land, we know not, but there is no evidence that there was a miracle in the case. The word translated *immediately* does not of necessity imply that there was no interval of time, but that there was not a long interval. Thus in Matt. xiii. 5, in the parable of the sower: "and forthwith (the same word in Greek) they sprung up," &c. Matt. xxiv. 29. Mark iv. 17. <sup>3</sup> John 14.

22. *The people which stood on the other side of the sea.* That is, on the east side, or on the same side with Jesus. The country was called the region beyond or on the other side of the sea, because the writer and the people lived on the west side. ¶ *Jesus went not with his disciples.* He had gone into a mountain to pray alone. Ver. 15. Compare Mark vi. 46.

20 But he saith unto them, It is <sup>3</sup> I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

22 ¶ The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone;

23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the

<sup>3</sup> Psal. xxxv. 3. Isa. xliiii. 1, 2. Rev. i. 17, 18.

23. *There came other boats.* After the disciples had departed. This is added, because from what follows it appears that they supposed he had entered one of those boats and gone to Capernaum after his disciples had departed. ¶ *From Tiberias.* This town stood on the western borders of the lake, not far from where the miracle had been wrought. It was so called in honour of the emperor Tiberius. It was built by Herod Antipas, and was made by him the capital of Galilee. The city afterwards became a celebrated seat of Jewish learning. It is now called *Taberish*, and is a considerable place. It is occupied chiefly by Turks, and is very hot and unhealthy. Mr. Fisk, an American missionary, was at Tiberias (Taberiah) in 1823, and Dr. Keith, and Messrs. Cheyne and Andrew Bonar in 1839. They all speak of the old town as surrounded by a wall, but within it is very ruinous, and the plain for a mile or two south is strewn with ruins. The Jordan, where it issues from the lake, was so shallow that cattle and asses forded it easily. Mr. F. was shown a house called the house of Peter, which is used as the Greek catholic church, and is the only church in the place. The number of christian families is thirty or forty, all Greek Catholics. There were two sects of Jews, each of whom had a synagogue. The Jewish population was estimated at 6000.

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## CHAPTER VI.

*Galilee.*

What shall we do, that we might see the works of God?

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

They said therefore unto him,

What sign shewest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 38. <sup>1</sup> Cor. i. 22. <sup>2</sup> Exod. xvi. 15. Num. xi. 7. <sup>1</sup> Cor. x. 3. <sup>4</sup> Neh. ix. 15. Psa. lxxviii. 24, 25.

They crossed the sea of Tiberias to seek him, they supposed him to be the Messiah, and they sincerely desired to be the way of life. Yet it is observable that they expected to find that way which sinners commonly do, by their own efforts. The idea of doing something to obtain salvation is one of the last that the sinner ever surrenders.

This is the work of God. This is the thing that will be acceptable to God, which you are to do in order to be saved. Jesus did not tell them they had anything to do, or that they were to sit and wait, but that there was a work for them to perform. And that was a duty that was imperative. It was to believe on the Messiah. This is the work which sinners are to do. And doing this they will be saved, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. *Gal. iii. 2.*

30. *What sign shewest thou?* On the word *sign* compare Note on *Isa. vii. 14.* That miracle dost thou work to prove that thou art the Messiah? They had just seen the miracle of the loaves in the desert, which was sufficient to show that he was the Messiah, and it would seem from the preceding narrative that those who crossed the lake to see him supposed that he was the Christ. It seems wonderful that they should so soon ask for further evidence that he was sent from God. But it is not improbable that this question was put by other Jews, rulers of the synagogue, who happened to be present, and who had not witnessed his miracles. Those men were continually asking for signs and proofs that he was the Messiah. See *Matt. xii. 38, 39.* *Mark viii. 11.* *Luke xi. 29.* As Jesus claimed the right of teaching them, and as it was manifest that he would teach them differently from what they supposed Moses to teach, it was natural to ask him

by what authority he claimed the right to be heard.

31. *Our fathers.* The Jews who were led by Moses through the wilderness.

¶ *Did eat manna.* This was the name given by the Jews to the food which was furnished to them by God in their journey. It means literally, "what is this?" and was the question which the people asked when they first saw it. *Exod. xvi. 14, 15.* It was small, like frost, and of the size of coriander-seed, and had a sweetish taste, like honey. It fell in great quantities, and was regarded by the Jews as proof of a continued miracle during forty years, and was incontestable evidence of the interposition of God in favour of their fathers. The manna which is sold in the shops of druggists is a different substance from this. It is obtained from the bark of certain trees in Armenia, Georgia, Persia, and Arabia. It is procured, as resin is, by making an incision in the bark, and it flows out or distils from the tree.

¶ *As it is written.* The substance of this is written in *Psa. lxxviii. 24, 25.*

¶ *He gave them.* This was regarded as a miraculous interference in their behalf, and an attestation of the divine mission of Moses, and hence they said familiarly that Moses gave it them. ¶ *Bread from heaven.* The word *heaven* in the scriptures, denotes often the region of the air, or the atmosphere, or that region in which the clouds are. See *Matt. xvi. 3:* "the sky (heaven) is red and lowering." Also *Matt. iii. 16.* *Luke iv. 27; x. 18.* The Jews, as appears from their writings, (see *Lightfoot*), expected that the Messiah would provide his followers with plenty of delicious food; and as Moses had provided for the Jews in the wilderness, so they supposed that Christ would make provision for the temporal wants of his friends. This was the sign probably which they were now desirous of seeing.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my <sup>1</sup> Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God <sup>2</sup> is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 33, 35, 41, 50, 53, 59; ch. i. 9. Gal. iv. 4. 1 John v. 20. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 48, 58.

32. *Moses gave you not that bread from heaven.* This might be translated, "Moses gave you not the bread of heaven." The word *that*, which makes some difference in the sense, is not necessary to express the meaning of the original. It does not appear that Jesus intended to call in question the fact that their fathers were fed by the instrumentality of Moses, but to state that he did not give them the true bread that should be adapted to the wants of the soul. He fed the body, although his food did not keep the body alive, ver. 49; but he did not give that which should preserve the soul from death. God gave in his Son Jesus the true bread from heaven which was fitted to man, and of far more value than any supply of their temporal wants. He tells them, therefore, that they are not to seek from him any such supply of their temporal wants as they had supposed. A better gift had been furnished in his being given for the life of the world. ¶ *My Father giveth you.* In the gospel; in the gift of his Son. ¶ *The true bread.* The true or real support which is needed to keep the soul from death. It is not false, deceitful, or perishing. Christ is called *bread*, because as bread supports the life, so his doctrine supports, preserves, and saves the soul from death. He is the true support, not only in opposition to the mere supply of temporal wants such as Moses furnished, but also in opposition to all false religion which deceives and destroys the soul.

33. *The bread of God.* The means of support which God furnishes. That which in his view is needful for man.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he <sup>3</sup> that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he <sup>4</sup> that believeth on me shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also <sup>5</sup> have seen me, and believe not.

37 All <sup>6</sup> that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and <sup>7</sup> him

<sup>3</sup> Rev. vii. 16. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iv. 14; vii. 38. <sup>5</sup> Ver. 64. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 45; ch. xvii. 6—9. <sup>7</sup> Psa. cii. 17. Isa. i. 18; lv. 7. Matt. xi. 28. Luke xxiii. 42, 43. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. Rev. xxii. 17.

¶ *Is he, &c.* Is the Messiah who has come from heaven. ¶ *And giveth life, &c.* See Note, ch. i. 4.

35. *I am the bread of life.* I am the support of spiritual life; or my doctrine will give life and peace to the soul. ¶ *Shall never hunger.* See Note, ch. iv. 14.

36. *But I said unto you.* This he said, not in so many words, but in substance, in ver. 26. Though they saw him, and had full proof of his divine mission, yet they did not believe. Jesus then proceeds to state that, although they did not believe on him, yet his work would not be in vain, for others would come to him and be saved.

37. *All.* The original word is in the neuter gender, but it is used doubtless for the masculine, and means that every individual that the Father had given should come to him. ¶ *The Father giveth me.* We here learn that those who come to Christ, and who shall be saved, are given to him by God. 1. God promised him that he should see of the travail of his soul; that is, "the fruit of his wearisome toil," (Lowth) and should be satisfied. Isa. liii. 11. 2. All men are sinners, and none have any claim to his mercy, and he may therefore bestow his salvation on whom he pleases. 3. All men of themselves are disposed to reject the gospel. Ch. v. 40. 4. God enables those who do believe to do it. He draws them to him by his word and Spirit; he opens their heart to understand the scriptures, Acts xvi. 14; and he grants to them repentance. Acts xi. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 25. 5. All those who become Christians may, therefore, be said to be given to

that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but<sup>1</sup> the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 30. Psa. xl. 7, 8.

Jesus, as the reward of his sufferings, for his death was the price by which they were redeemed. Paul says, Eph. i. 4, 5, that "he hath chosen us in him, i. e., in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto adoption of children to himself according to the good pleasure of his will." ¶ *Shall come to me.* This is an expression denoting that they shall believe on him. To come to one, implies our need of help, our confidence that he can aid us, and our readiness to trust to him. The sinner comes to Jesus feeling that he is poor, and needy, and wretched, and casts himself on his mercy, believing that he only can save him. This expression also proves that men are not compelled to come to Christ. Though they who believe are given to him, and though his Spirit works in them faith and repentance, yet they are made willing in the day of his power. Psa. cx. 3. No man is compelled to go to heaven against his will; and no man is compelled to go to hell against his will. The Spirit of God inclines the will of one, and he comes freely as a moral agent. The other chooses the way to death; and, though God is constantly using means to save him, yet he prefers the path that leads down to woe. ¶ *Him that cometh.* Every one that comes; that is, every one that comes in a proper manner, feeling that he is a lost and ruined sinner. This invitation is wide, and full, and free. It shows the unbounded mercy of God; and it shows also that the reason, and the only reason, why men are not saved, is because they will not come to Christ. Of any sinner it may be said, that if he would have come to Christ, he might have come and have been saved. As he chooses not to come, he cannot blame God because he saves others who are willing, no matter from what cause, and who thus are made partakers of everlasting life. ¶ *In no wise.* In no manner; or at no time. The original is

which hath sent me, that of<sup>2</sup> all which he hath given me<sup>3</sup> I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. x. 28; xvii. 12; xviii. 9. Matt. xviii. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 19. <sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 29. Col. iii. 3, 4. 1 Pet. i. 5.

simply, "I will not cast out." ¶ *Cast out.* Reject, or refuse to save. This expression does not refer to the doctrine of perseverance of the saints, but to the fact that Jesus will not reject or refuse to help any sinner who comes to him.

38. *For I came down, &c.* This verse shows that he came for a specific purpose, which he states in the next verse, and means that as he came to do his Father's will, he would be faithful to the trust. Though his hearers should reject him, yet the will of God would be accomplished in the salvation of some who should come to him. ¶ *Mine own will.* See Note, ch. v. 30.

39. *Father's will.* His purpose, desire, intention. As this is the Father's will, and Jesus came to execute his will, we have the highest security that it will be done. God's will is always right, and he has power to execute it. Jesus was always faithful, and all power was given to him in heaven and on earth, and he will, therefore, most certainly accomplish the will of God. ¶ *Of all which.* That is, of every one who believes on him, or of all who become Christians. See ver. 37. ¶ *I should lose nothing.* Literally, *I should not destroy.* He affirms here that he will keep it to life eternal; that though the Christian will die, and his body return to corruption, yet he will not be destroyed. The Redeemer will watch over him though in his grave, and keep him to the resurrection of the just. This is affirmed of all who are given to him by the Father; or, as in the next verse, "every one that believeth on him shall have everlasting life." ¶ *At the last day.* At the day of judgment. The Jews supposed that the righteous would be raised up at the appearing of the Messiah. (See Light-foot.) Jesus directs them to a future resurrection, and declares to them that they will be raised at the last day, the day of judgment. It is also supposed, and affirmed by some Jewish writers, that they did not believe that the wicked





45 It is written <sup>1</sup> in the prophets,  
And they shall be all taught of  
God. Every man <sup>2</sup> therefore that  
hath heard, and hath learned of  
the Father, cometh unto me.

46 Not <sup>3</sup> that any man hath

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 34. Mic. iv. 2.  
<sup>2</sup> Matt. xi. 27. <sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 37.

of power to do their duty, but erroneous opinions, pride, obstinacy, self-conceit, and a deep-felt contempt for Jesus. The word *cannot* is often used to denote a strong and violent opposition of the will. Thus we say a man is so great a liar that he cannot speak the truth; or he is so profane, that he cannot but swear. We mean that the man is so evil that while he has the disposition these effects will follow, but we do not mean to say that he could not break off from the habit. Thus it is said, Gen. xxxvii. 4, of the brethren of Joseph, that they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him. Thus Matt. xii. 34, "how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" See 1 Sam. xvi. 2. Luke xiv. 33. ¶ *Come to me.* The same as believe on me. ¶ *Draw him.* This word is used here evidently to denote such an influence from God as to secure the result; or as to incline the mind to believe. Yet the manner in which this is done is not determined by the use of the word. It is used in the New Testament six times. Once it is applied to a compulsory drawing of Paul and Silas to the market place. Acts xvi. 19. Twice it is used to denote the drawing of a net. Ch. xxi. 6. '11. Once to the drawing of a sword, ch. xviii. 10; and once in a sense similar to its use here, ch. xii. 32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." What is its meaning here must be determined by the facts about the sinner's conversion. See Note on ver. 40. In the conversion of the sinner, God enlightens the mind, ver. 45; he inclines the will, Psa. cx. 3; and he influences the soul by motives, by the view of his law, and by his love, his commands and threatenings; by a desire of happiness, and a consciousness of danger; by the Holy Spirit applying his truth to the mind, and urging him to yield himself to the Saviour. So that while God inclines him, and will have all the glory,

seen the Father, save he which is of God, <sup>4</sup> he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you,  
<sup>5</sup> He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 29; viii. 55. Matt. xi. 27. Luke x. 22. <sup>5</sup> Ver. 40. Col. iii. 3, 4. 1 John v. 12, 13.

man yields without compulsion; the obstacles are removed, and he becomes a willing servant of God.

45. *In the prophets.* Isa. liv. 13. A similar sentiment is found in Mic. iv. 1—4, and Jer. xxxi. 34. But by the *prophets* here is meant the book of the prophets, and it is probable that Jesus had reference only to the place in Isaiah, as this was the usual way of quoting the prophets. ¶ *Shall be all taught of God.* This explains the preceding verse. It is by the teaching of his word and Spirit that men are drawn to God. This shows that it is not compulsory, and that there is no obstacle in the way, but a strong voluntary ignorance and unwillingness.

46. *Not that any man hath seen the Father.* Jesus added this evidently to guard against any mistake. He had said that all who came to him were taught of God. The teacher was commonly seen and heard by the pupil; and lest it should be supposed that he meant to say that a man to come to him must see and hear God, visibly and audibly, he adds that he did not intend to affirm this. That it was still true that no man had seen God at any time. They were not, therefore, to expect to see God, and his words were not to be perverted, as if he meant to teach that. ¶ *Save he which is of God.* Jesus here evidently refers to himself as the Son of God. He had just said that no man had seen the Father. When he affirms that he has seen the Father, it implies that he is more than man. He is the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, ch. i. 18; the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, Heb. i. 3; and God over all blessed for ever. Rom. ix. 5. By his being *of God*, is meant that he is the only-begotten Son of God, and sent as the Messiah into the world. ¶ *Hath seen.* Hath intimately known or perceived him. He knows his nature, char-

48 I <sup>1</sup> am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and <sup>2</sup> are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and <sup>3</sup> not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 33, 35, 51.    <sup>2</sup> Zech. i. 5.    <sup>3</sup> Ver. 59. Ch. vii. 51.

racter, plans. This is a claim to knowledge superior to what man possesses, and it cannot be understood except by supposing that Jesus is equal with God.

48. *I am that bread of life.* My doctrines, and the benefits of my mediation are that real support of spiritual life of which the manna in the wilderness was the faint emblem. See ver. 32, 33.

49. *Your fathers did eat manna.* There was a real miracle wrought in their behalf; there was a perpetual interposition of God which showed that they were his chosen people. ¶ *And are dead.* The bread which they ate could not save from death. Though God interfered in their behalf, yet they died. ¶ We may learn, 1. That that is not the most valuable of God's gifts which merely satisfies the temporal wants. 2. That the most distinguished temporal blessings will not save from death. Wealth, friends, food, raiment, will not preserve life. 3. There is need of something better than mere earthly blessings; there is need of that bread which cometh down from heaven, and which giveth life to the world.

51. *The bread which I shall give you is my flesh.* That is, his body would be offered as a sacrifice for sin, agreeably to his declaration when he instituted the supper, "This is my body which is broken for you." 1 Cor. xi. 24. ¶ *Life of the world.* That the world might, by his atoning sacrifice, be pardoned, be reconciled to God, and be brought to eternal life. The use of the word *world* here, shows that the sacrifice of Christ was full, free, ample, and designed for all men, as it is said in 1 John ii. 2, "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." In this verse, Jesus introduces the subject of his death and atone-

live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, <sup>4</sup> which I will give for the life <sup>5</sup> of the world.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How <sup>6</sup> can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ex-

<sup>4</sup> Heb. x. 5, 10, 20.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. iii. 16.    1 John ii. 2.    <sup>6</sup> Ch. iii. 9.

ment. It may be remarked that in the language which he used, the transition from bread to his flesh would appear more easy than it does in our language. The same word which in Hebrew means bread, in the Syriac and Arabic means also flesh.

53—55. In these verses Jesus repeats what he had, in substance, said before. ¶ *Except ye eat the flesh, &c.* He did not mean that this should be understood literally, for it was never done, and it is absurd to suppose that it was intended to be understood literally. Nothing can possibly be more absurd than to suppose that when he instituted the supper, and gave the bread and wine to his disciples, they literally ate his flesh, and drank his blood. Who can believe this! There he stood, a living man, his body yet alive, his blood flowing in his veins; and how can it be believed that this body was eaten and this blood drunk! Yet this absurdity must be held by those who hold that the bread and wine at the communion are "changed into the body, blood, and the divinity of our Lord." So it is taught in the decrees of the Council of Trent; and to such absurdities are men driven when they depart from the simple meaning of the scriptures, and from common sense. It may be added, that if the bread and wine used in the Lord's supper were not changed into his literal body and blood when it was first instituted, they have never been since. The Lord Jesus would institute it just as he meant it should be observed; and there is nothing now in that ordinance which there was not when the Saviour first appointed it. His body was offered on the cross, and was raised up from the dead, and received into heaven. There is no evidence of reference in this place to the Lord's supper. That

cept <sup>1</sup> ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso <sup>2</sup> eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, <sup>3</sup> and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth <sup>4</sup> my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth <sup>5</sup> in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father:

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26, 28. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 40. <sup>3</sup> Psa. iv. 7. <sup>4</sup> Lam. iii. 24. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xv. 4. <sup>1</sup> John iii. 24; iv. 15, 16.

was not yet instituted, and in that there was no literal eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood. The plain meaning of the passage is, that by his bloody death, his body, and his blood offered in sacrifice for sin, he would procure pardon and life for man; and that they who partook of that, or had an interest in that, should obtain eternal life. He uses the figure of eating and drinking, because that was the subject of discourse, because the Jews prided themselves much on the fact that their fathers had eaten manna, and because, as he had said that he was the bread of life, it was natural and easy, especially in the language which he used, to carry out the figure, and say that bread must be eaten in order to be of any avail in supporting and saving men. To eat and to drink, among the Jews, was also expressive of sharing in, or partaking of the privileges of friendship. The happiness of heaven and all spiritual blessings are often represented under this image. Matt. viii. 11; xxvi. 29. Luke xiv. 15—24.

55. *Is meat indeed.* Is truly food. My doctrine is truly that which will give life to the soul.

56. *Dwelleth in me.* Is truly and intimately connected with me. To dwell or abide in him, is to remain in the belief of his doctrine, and in the participation of all the benefits of his death. Compare John xv. 1—7; xvii. 21—23. ¶ *I in him.* Jesus dwells in believers by his Spirit and doctrine. When his spirit is

so <sup>6</sup> he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers <sup>7</sup> did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself

<sup>6</sup> Ch. xi. 25, 26. <sup>1</sup> Cor. xv. 22. <sup>2</sup> Cor. xiii. 4. Gal. ii. 20. <sup>7</sup> Ver. 49—51.

given them to sanctify them; when his temper, his meekness, humility and love, pervade their hearts; when his doctrine is received by them, and influences their life; and when they are supported by the consolations of the gospel, it may be said that he abides or dwells in them.

57. *I live by the Father.* See Note, ch. v. 26.

58. *This is that bread, &c.* This is the true bread that came down. The word *that* should not be in the translation. ¶ *Shall live for ever.* Not on the earth, but in the enjoyments of a better world.

61. *Many of the disciples.* The word *disciple* means learner. It was applied to the followers of Christ, because they were taught by him. It does not imply of necessity that those to whom it was given were real Christians, but simply that they were under his teaching, and were professed learners in the school of Jesus. See ch. ix. 28. Matt. x. 24; xvii. 16. Mark ii. 18. It is doubtless used in this sense here. It is, however, often applied to those who were real Christians. ¶ *This is an hard saying.* The word *hard* here means offensive, ungrateful, that which they could not bear. Some have understood it to mean, difficult to be understood; but this meaning does not suit the connexion. The doctrine which he delivered was opposed to their prejudices; it seemed to be absurd, and they, therefore, rejected it. ¶ *Saying.* Rather, doctrine or speech. Greek, *Logos*. It does not refer to any particular part of the discourse, but to

that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend <sup>1</sup> up where he was before?

63 It <sup>2</sup> is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

64 But there are some of you

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iii. 13. Mark xvi. 19. Eph. iv. 8—10.  
<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 6.

cludes the whole. *Who can hear it?* That is, who can hear it patiently? who can stay and listen to such doctrine, or believe it? The effect of this is stated in ver. 66. The doctrines which Jesus taught that were so offensive, appear to have been, 1. That he was superior to Moses. 2. That God would save all but he chose. 3. That he said he was the bread that came from heaven. 4. That it was necessary to partake of that bread, or it was necessary that an atonement should be made, and that they should be saved only by such atonement. These doctrines have always been among the most offensive that men have been called on to believe, and many, rather than trust in them, have chosen to draw back to perdition.

62. *What and if, &c.* Jesus does not say that those then present would see him ascend, but he implies that he would ascend. They had taken offence because he said he came down from heaven. Instead of explaining that away, he proceeds to state another doctrine quite as offensive to them, that he would re-ascend to heaven. The apostles only were present at his ascension. Acts i. 9. As Jesus was to ascend to heaven, it was clear that he could not have intended literally that they should eat his flesh.

63. *It is the spirit that quickeneth.* These words have been understood in different ways. The word *spirit* here evidently does not refer to the Holy Ghost, for he adds, "The words that I speak unto you are spirit." He refers here probably to the doctrine which he had been teaching in relation to their notions and doctrine is spiritual; it is

that believe not. For Jesus knew <sup>3</sup> from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I <sup>4</sup> unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 ¶ From that time many of his disciples went back, <sup>5</sup> and walked no more with him.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 29. 2 Tim. ii. 19. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 44.  
<sup>5</sup> Zeph. i. 6. Luke ix. 62. Heb. x. 32.

fitted to quicken and nourish the soul. It is from heaven. Your doctrine, or your views, are earthly and may be called flesh, or fleshly, as pertaining only to the support of the body. You place a great value on the doctrine that Moses fed the body. Yet that did not permanently profit, for your fathers are dead. You seek also food from me, but your views and desires are gross and earthly. ¶ *Quickeneth. Gives life.* Note, ch. v. 21. ¶ *The flesh.* Your carnal views and desires, and the literal understanding of my doctrine. By this Jesus shows them that he did not intend that his words should be taken literally. ¶ *Profiteth nothing.* Would not avail to the real wants of man. The bread that Moses gave, the food which you seek, would not be of real value to man's highest wants. ¶ *They are spirit.* They are spiritual. They are not to be understood literally, as if you were really to eat my flesh, but they are to be understood as denoting the need of that provision for the soul which God has made by my coming into the world. ¶ *Are life.* Are fitted to produce or give life to the soul dead in sins.

64. *Jesus knew from the beginning, &c.* As this implied a knowledge of the heart, and of the secret principles and motives of men, it shows that he must have been omniscient.

66. *Many of his disciples.* Many who had followed him professedly as his disciples, and as desirous of learning of him. Note, ver. 60. ¶ *Went back.* Turned away from him and left him. From this we may learn: 1. Not to wonder at the apostasy of many professed followers of

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the <sup>1</sup> words of eternal life.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 40, 63. Acts v. 20; vii. 38. 1 John v. 11—13.

Christ. Many are induced to become his professed followers by the prospect of some temporal benefit, or by some public excitement, as these were, and when that excitement is over they fall away. 2. Many may be expected to be offended by the doctrines of the gospel. Having no spirituality of mind, and really understanding nothing of the gospel, they may be expected to take offence and turn back. The best way to understand the doctrines of the bible, is to be a sincere Christian, and aim to do the will of God. Ch. vii. 17. 3. We should examine ourselves. We should honestly inquire whether we have been led to make a profession of religion by the hope of any temporal advantage, by any selfish principle, or by mere excited animal feeling. If we have, it will profit us nothing; and we shall either fall away, or be cast away in the great day of judgment.

67. *The twelve.* The twelve apostles. ¶ *Will ye also go away?* Many apostatized, and it was natural now for Jesus to submit the question to the twelve. Will you, whom I have chosen, or on whom I have bestowed the apostleship, and you who have seen the evidence of my Messiahship, will you now also leave me? This was the time to try them. And this is the time to try all real Christians, when many professed disciples become cold, and turn back; and then we may suppose Jesus addressing us, and saying, Will ye also go away? Observe, here, it was submitted to their choice. God compels none to remain with him against their will, and the question in such trying times is submitted to every man whether he will or will not go away.

68. *Simon Peter answered him.* With characteristic ardour and promptness. Peter was probably one of the oldest of the apostles, and it was his character to be first, and most ardent in his professions. ¶ *To whom shall we go?* This implied

69 And <sup>2</sup> we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a <sup>3</sup> devil?

<sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 29; xl. 27. Matt. xvi. 16. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xiii. 27. 1 Tim. iii. 11. Tit. ii. 3. (*Greek.*)

their firm conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, and that he alone was able to teach and to save them. It is one of Peter's noble confessions, the instinctive promptings of a pious heart and of ardent love. There was no one else who could teach them. The Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the scribes were corrupt, and unable to guide them aright; and though the doctrines of Jesus were mysterious, yet they were the only doctrines that could guide and save them. ¶ *Thou hast, &c.* The meaning of this is, thou teachest the doctrines which lead to eternal life. And from this we may learn: 1. That we are to expect that some of the doctrines of the bible will be mysterious. 2. That though they are difficult to be understood, yet we should not therefore reject them. 3. That nothing would be gained by rejecting them. The atheist, the infidel, nay, the philosopher believes, or professes to believe, propositions quite as mysterious as any in the bible. 4. That poor, lost, sinful man, has nowhere else to go but to Jesus. He is the way, and the truth, and the life. And if the sinner betakes himself to any other way, he will wander and die. 5. We should, therefore, on no account, forsake the teachings of the Son of God. The words that he speaks are spirit and are life.

69. *We are sure, &c.* See a similar confession of Peter in Matt. xvi. 16, and the Notes on that place. Peter says *we* in the name of the whole of the apostles. Jesus immediately cautions him, as he did on other occasions, not to be too confident, for one of them actually had no such feelings, but was a traitor.

70. *Have I not chosen you twelve?* There is much emphasis in these words, *Have not I*—I the Saviour, the Messiah, chosen you in mercy, and in love, and therefore it will be a greater sin to betray me. ¶ *Chosen.* Chosen to the apostolic office; conferred on you marks of peculiar

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

## CHAPTER VII.

*The kinsmen of Jesus rebuked, 1—9. Jesus goes to the feast of tabernacles,*

favour, and treason is therefore the greater sin. ¶ *You twelve.* So small a number. Out of such a multitude as follow for the loaves and fishes, it is to be expected there should be apostates. But when the number is so small, chosen in such a manner, then it becomes every one, however confident he may be, to be on his guard, and examine his heart. ¶ *Is a devil.* Has the spirit, the envy, and malice, and treasonable designs of a devil. The word *devil* here is used in the sense of an enemy, or one hostile to him.

71. *He spake of Judas, &c.* There is no evidence that Jesus designated Judas so that the disciples then understood that it was he. It does not appear that the apostles suspected even Judas, as they continued to treat him afterwards with the same confidence, for he carried the bag, or the purse containing their little property, ch. xii. 6; xiii. 29, and at the table, when Jesus said that one of them would betray him, the rest did not suspect Judas until Jesus pointed him out particularly. Ch. xiii. 26. Jesus spoke of one, to put them on their guard, and to check their confidence, and to lead them to self-examination. So in every church, or company of professing Christians, we may know that it is probable that there may be some one or more deceived; but we may not know who it may be, and should therefore inquire prayerfully and honestly, "Lord, is it I?" ¶ *Should betray.* Would betray. If it be asked why Jesus called a man to be an apostle who he knew had no love for him, and who would betray him, and who had from the beginning the spirit of a devil, we may reply, 1. It was that he might be an important witness for his own innocence, and for the fact that he was not an impostor. Judas was with him more than three years. He was treated with the same confidence as the other apostles, and in some respects, even with superior confidence, as

10—13; teaches in the temple, 14—31. Many murmur, and Christ vindicates himself, 32—39. Disputes among the Pharisees respecting Christ, 40—53.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, <sup>1</sup> be-

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 19, 25; ch. v. 16—18. Matt. x. 23: xxi. 38.

he had "the bag," ch. xii. 6, or was the treasurer. He saw the Saviour in public and in private; heard his public discourses, and his private conversation; and would have been just the witness which the high priest and Pharisees would have desired if he had known any reason why he should be condemned. Yet he alleged nothing against him. Though he betrayed him, yet he afterwards said that he was innocent, and, under the convictions of conscience, committed suicide. If Judas had known any thing against the Saviour he would have alleged it. If he had known he was an impostor, and had alleged it, he would have saved his own life, and been rewarded. If Jesus was an impostor, Judas ought to have made it known, and would have been rewarded for it. 2. It may have been also with a foresight of the necessity of having such a man among his disciples, in order that his own death might be brought about in the manner in which it was predicted. There were several prophecies which would have been unfulfilled had there been no such man among the apostles. 3. It showed the knowledge which the Saviour had of the human heart, that he could thus discern character before it was developed, and be able so distinctly to predict that he would betray him. 4. We may add, what benevolence did the Saviour evince, what patience and forbearance, that he had with him for more than three years, a man who he knew hated him at heart, and who would yet betray him to be put to death on a cross, and that during all that time he treated him with the utmost kindness!

## CHAPTER VII.

1. *After these things.* After the transactions which are recorded in the last chapters had taken place, and after the offence he had given the Jews. See ch. v. 18. ¶ *Jesus walked.* Or Jesus lived.

cause the Jews sought to kill him.

2 Now the Jews' feast <sup>1</sup> of tabernacles was at hand.

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

4 For *there is no man that doeth*

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xxiii. 34.

or taught. He travelled around Galilee teaching. ¶ *In Jewry.* In Judæa, the southern division of Palestine. ¶ *The Jews sought.* That is, the rulers of the Jews. It does not appear that the common people ever attempted to take his life.

2. *The Jews' feast of tabernacles.* Or the feast of tents. This feast was celebrated on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri, answering to the last half of our month September, and the first half of October. Num. xxix. 12. Deut. xvi. 13—15. It was so called from the tents or tabernacles which on that occasion were erected in and about Jerusalem, and was designed to commemorate their dwelling in tents in the wilderness. Neh. viii. 16—18. During the continuance of this feast, they dwelt in booths or tents, as their fathers did in the wilderness. Lev. xxiii. 42, 43. The feast was continued eight days, and the eighth or last day was the most distinguished, and was called the great day of the feast. Ver. 37. Num. xxix. 35. The Jews on this occasion not only dwelt in booths, but they carried about the branches of palms, willows, and other trees, which bore a thick foliage, and also branches of the olive-tree, myrtle, &c. Neh. viii. 15. Many sacrifices were offered on this occasion, Num. xxix. 12—39. Deut. xvi. 14—16, and it was a time of general joy. It is called by Josephus and Philo the greatest feast, and was one of the three feasts which every male among the Jews was obliged to attend.

3. *His brethren.* See Note on Matt. xiii. 55. ¶ *Thy disciples.* The disciples which he had made when he was before in Judæa. Ch. iv. 1—3. ¶ *The works.* The miracles.

4, 5. *For there is no man, &c.* The

any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, <sup>2</sup> shew thyself to the world.

5 For neither did his brethren believe <sup>3</sup> in him.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My <sup>4</sup> time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 20. Matt. iv. 6. Acts ii. 4—12. <sup>3</sup> Mark iii. 21. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 8, 30; ch. ii. 4; viii. 20.

brethren of Jesus supposed that he was influenced as others are. And as it is a common thing among men to seek popularity, so they supposed that he would also seek it; and as a great multitude would be assembled at Jerusalem at this feast, they supposed it would be a favourable time to make himself known. What follows shows that this was said probably not in sincerity, but in derision; and to the other sufferings of our Lord was to be added, what is so common to Christians, derision from his relatives and friends, on account of his pretensions. If our Saviour was derided, we also may expect derision from our relatives; and having his example, we should be content to bear it. ¶ *If thou do, &c.* It appears from this that they did not really believe that he wrought miracles; or if they did believe it, they did not suppose that he was the Christ. Yet it seems hardly credible that they could suppose that his miracles were real, and yet not admit that he was the Messiah. Besides, there is no evidence that these relatives had been present at any of his miracles; and all that they knew of them might have been from report. See Notes on Mark iii. 21. On the word *brethren* in ver. 5, see Notes on Matt. xiii. 55, and Gal. i. 19.

6. *My time, &c.* The proper time for his going up to the feast. We know not why it was not yet a proper time for him to go. It might be because if he went then, in their company, while multitudes were going, it would have too much the appearance of parade and ostentation; might excite too much notice, and be more likely to expose him to the envy and opposition of the rulers. ¶ *Your time, &c.* It makes no difference to you when you go up. Your going will excite no tumult or opposition; it will not attract



7 The <sup>1</sup> world cannot hate you ; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

8 Go ye up unto this feast : I go not up yet unto this feast ; for my time is not yet full come.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

10 ¶ But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xv. 19.

attention, and will not endanger your lives. Jesus, therefore, chose to go up more privately, and to remain until the multitude had gone. They commonly travelled to those feasts in large companies, made up of most of the families in the neighbourhood. See Note, Luke ii. 44.

7. *The world cannot hate you.* You profess no principles in opposition to the world. You do not excite its envy, or rouse against you the civil rulers. As you possess the same spirit and principles with the men of the world, they cannot be expected to hate you. ¶ *I testify of it.* I bear witness against it. This was the main cause of their opposition to Jesus. He proclaimed that men were depraved, and the result was that they hated him. We may expect that all who preach faithfully against the wickedness of men will excite opposition. Yet this is not to deter us from doing our duty, and, after the example of Jesus, from proclaiming to men their sins, whatever may be the result.

8. *I go not up yet.* Jesus remained until about the middle of the feast. Ver. 14. That is, he remained about four days after his brethren, or until the mass of the people had gone up, so that his going might excite no attention, or that it might not be said he chose such a time to excite a tumult. We have here a signal instance of our Lord's prudence and opposition to parade. Though it would have been lawful for him to go up at that time, and though it would have been

11 Then <sup>2</sup> the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he ?

12 And <sup>3</sup> there was much murmuring among the people concerning him : for some said, He is a good man : others said, Nay ; but he deceiveth the people.

13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

14 ¶ Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 54.    <sup>3</sup> Ch. ix. 16.

a favourable period to make himself known, yet he chose to forego these advantages rather than to afford an occasion of envy and jealousy to the rulers, or to appear even to excite a tumult among the people.

12. *Murmuring.* Contention, disputing. ¶ *He deceiveth the people.* That is, he is deluding them, or drawing them away by pretending to be the Messiah.

13. *Spake openly of him.* The word translated *openly*, here, is commonly rendered boldly. This refers, doubtless, to those who really believed on him. His enemies were not silent ; but his friends had not confidence to speak of him openly, boldly, or to speak what they really thought. Many supposed that he was the Messiah ; yet even this they did not dare to profess. All that they could say in his favour was that he was a good man. There are many such friends of Jesus in the world, who are desirous of saying something good about him, but who from fear, or shame, refuse to make a full acknowledgment of him. Many will praise his morals, his precepts, or his holy life, while they are ashamed to speak of his divinity, his atonement, his holiness, and still more to acknowledge that they are dependent on him alone for salvation.

14. *About the midst.* Or about the middle of the feast. It continued eight days. ¶ *The temple.* See Note, Matt. xxi. 12. ¶ *And taught.* Great multitudes were assembled in and around the temple, and it was a favourable time and place to make known his doctrine.

15 And <sup>1</sup> the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, <sup>2</sup> having never learned?

16 Jesus answered them, and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 54.    <sup>2</sup> Or, learning.

15. *Knoweth this man letters.* The Jewish letters or science consisted in the knowledge of their scriptures and traditions. Jesus exhibited in his discourses such a profound acquaintance with the Old Testament, as to excite their amazement and admiration. ¶ *Having never learned.* The Jews taught their law and tradition in celebrated schools. As Jesus had not been instructed in those schools, they were amazed at his learning. What early human teaching the Saviour had we have no means of ascertaining further than that it was customary for the Jews to teach their children to read the scriptures. 2 Tim. iii. 15.

16. *My doctrine.* My teaching, or what I teach. This is the proper meaning of the word *doctrine*. It is what is taught us, and as applied to religion, it is what is taught us by God in the holy scriptures. ¶ *Is not mine.* It is not originated by me. Though I have not learned in your schools, yet you are not to infer that the doctrine which I teach is devised or invented by me. I teach nothing that is contrary to the will of God, and which he has not appointed me to teach. ¶ *His that sent me.* God's. It is such as he approves, and such as he has commissioned me to teach. The doctrine is divine in its origin, and in its nature.

17. *If any man will do his will.* Literally, if any man wills, or is willing to do the will of God. If there is a disposition to do that will, though he should not be able perfectly to keep his commandments. To do the will of God, is to obey his commandments, to yield our hearts and lives to his requirements. A disposition to do his will, is a readiness to yield our intellects, and feelings, and all that we have, entirely to him, to be governed according to his pleasure. ¶ *He shall know.* He shall have evidence, in the very attempt to do the will of God, of the truth of his doctrine. This evidence is internal, and to the individual it

said, My doctrine is not <sup>3</sup> mine, but his that sent me.

17 If <sup>4</sup> any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine,

<sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 28; xii. 49.    <sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 43.

is satisfactory and conclusive. It is of two kinds. 1. He will find that the doctrines which Jesus taught are such as commend themselves to the reason and conscience, and such as are consistent with all that we know of the perfections of God. His doctrines will commend themselves to us as fitted to make us pure and happy, and of course such as must be from God. 2. An honest desire to obey God will lead a man to embrace the great doctrines of the Bible. As, e.g. he will find that his heart is depraved, and inclined to evil, and he will see and feel the truth of the doctrine of depravity, he will find that he is a sinner and needs to be born again; he will learn his own weakness, and see his need of a Saviour, of an atonement, and of pardoning mercy; he will feel that he is polluted and needs the purifying influence of the Holy Spirit. Thus we may learn, 1. That an honest effort to obey God is the easiest way to learn the doctrines of the bible. 2. Those who make such an effort will not cavil at any of the doctrines of the scriptures. 3. This is evidence of the truth of revelation which every man can apply to his own case. 4. It is such evidence as to lead to certainty. And this is the kind of evidence that man needs. No man who has ever made an honest effort to live a pious life, and to do all the will of God, has ever had any doubt of the truth of the Saviour's doctrines, or any doubt that his religion is true, and is fitted to the nature of man. Those only doubt the truth of religion who wish to live in sin. 5. We see the goodness of God in giving us evidence of his truth that may be within every man's reach. It does not require great learning to be a Christian, and to be convinced of the truth of the bible. It requires an honest heart, and a willingness to obey God. ¶ *Whether it be of God.* Whether it be divine. ¶ *Or whether I speak of myself.* Of myself without being commissioned or directed by God.

whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

18 He <sup>1</sup> that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that <sup>2</sup> seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

19 Did not Moses <sup>3</sup> give you the law, and *yet* none <sup>4</sup> of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill <sup>5</sup> me?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 50. <sup>2</sup> Prov. xxv. 27. <sup>3</sup> John i. 17. Gal. iii. 19. <sup>4</sup> Rom. iii. 10—19. <sup>5</sup> Ch. v. 16, 18. Matt. xii. 14.

18. *That speaketh of himself.* This does not mean about, or concerning himself, but he that speaks by his own authority, without being sent by God, as mere human teachers do. ¶ *Seeketh his own glory.* His own praise, or seeks for reputation and applause. This is the case with mere human teachers, and as Jesus, in his discourses, manifestly sought to honour God, they ought to have supposed that he was sent by him. ¶ *No unrighteousness.* This word here means evidently, there is no falsehood, no deception, in him. He is not an impostor. It is used in the same sense in <sup>2</sup> Thess. ii. 10—12. It is true that there was no unrighteousness, no sin in Jesus Christ, but that is not the truth taught here. It is that he was no impostor, and the evidence of this was, that he sought not his own glory, but the honour of God. This evidence was furnished: 1. In his retiring, unobtrusive disposition, in his not seeking the applause of men. 2. In his teaching such doctrines as tended to exalt God and humble man. 3. In his ascribing all glory and praise to God.

19. *Did not Moses give you the law?* This they admitted, and on this they prided themselves. Every violation of that law they considered as deserving of death. They had accused Jesus of violating it, because he had healed a man on the sabbath, and for that they had sought his life. Ch. v. 10—16. Jesus here recalls that charge to their recollection, and shows them that though they pretended great reverence for that law, yet they were really its violators in having sought his life. ¶ *None of you, &c.* None of you Jews. They had sought to kill him.

20 The people answered and said, <sup>6</sup> Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22 Moses <sup>7</sup> therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but <sup>8</sup> of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

<sup>6</sup> Ch. viii. 48. <sup>7</sup> Lev. xii. 3. <sup>8</sup> Gen. xvii. 10.

This was a pointed and severe charge, and shows the great faithfulness and point with which he was accustomed to proclaim the truth. ¶ *Why go ye about to kill me?* Why do ye seek to kill me! See ch. v. 16.

20. *The people.* Perhaps some of the people who were not aware of the designs of the rulers. ¶ *Thou hast a devil.* Thou art deranged, or mad. See ch. x. 20. As they saw no effort to kill him, and as they were ignorant of the designs of the rulers, they supposed that this was the effect of derangement.

21. *One work.* The healing of the man on the sabbath. Ch. v. ¶ *Ye all marvel.* Ye all wonder, or are amazed, and particularly that it was done on the sabbath. This was the particular ground of astonishment, that he should dare to do what they esteemed a violation of the sabbath.

22. *Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision.* Moses commanded you to circumcise your children. Lev. xii. 3. The word *therefore* does not mean that Moses gave them circumcision on account of the work which Christ was to do, but is used in the sense of moreover; or, for the sake of illustration. ¶ *Not because, &c.* Not that it is of Moses. Though Jesus spoke in accordance with the custom of the Jews, who ascribed the appointment of circumcision to Moses, yet he is careful to remind them that it was in observance long before Moses. So also the sabbath was kept before Moses, and in the same case and the other they ought to keep in mind the design of the appointment. ¶ *Of the fathers.* Of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Gen. xvii. 10.

23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision,<sup>1</sup> that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because<sup>2</sup> I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?

24 Judge<sup>3</sup> not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

25 Then said some of them of

<sup>1</sup> Or, without breaking the law of Moses.  
<sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 8. <sup>3</sup> Deut. i. 16, 17.

¶ *Ye on the sabbath day, &c.* The law required that the child should be circumcised on the eighth day. If that day happened to be the sabbath, yet they held that he was to be circumcised, as there was a positive law to that effect; and as this was commanded, they did not consider it a breach of the sabbath. ¶ *A man.* Not an adult man, but a man-child. See ch. xvi. 21. "She remembereth no more her sorrow for joy that a man is born into the world."

23. *That the law of Moses should not be broken.* In order that the law requiring it to be done on the sabbath day should be kept. ¶ *Are ye angry, &c.* The argument of Jesus is this: "You yourselves in interpreting the law about the sabbath, allow a work of necessity and mercy to be done. You do that which is necessary as an ordinance of religion denoting separation from other nations, or external purity. As you allow this, you ought always to allow for the same reason that a man should be completely restored to health; that a work of mercy of much more importance should be done." We may learn here, that it would be happy for all if they would not condemn others in that thing which they allow. Men often accuse others of doing things which they themselves do in other ways. ¶ *Every whit whole.* Literally, "I have restored the whole man to health," implying that the man's whole body was diseased, and that he had been entirely restored to health.

24. *According to appearance.* Not as a thing first offers itself to you, without reflection, or candour. In appearance to circumcise a child on the sabbath might be a violation of the law. Yet you do it, and it is right. So to appearance it might

Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do<sup>4</sup> the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

27 Howbeit<sup>5</sup> we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

<sup>4</sup> Ver. 48. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xiii. 35.

be a violation of the sabbath to heal a man; yet it is right to do works of necessity and mercy. ¶ *Judys righteous judgment.* Candidly; looking at the law, and inquiring what its spirit really requires.

26. *Do the rulers know indeed, &c.* It seems from this that they supposed that the rulers had been convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, but from some cause they were not willing yet to make it known to the people. The reasons of this opinion were these: 1. They knew that they had attempted to kill him. 2. They now saw him speaking boldly to the people without interruption from the rulers. They concluded therefore that some change had taken place in the sentiments of the rulers in regard to him, though they had not yet made it public. ¶ *The rulers.* The members of the sanhedrim, or great council of the nation, who had charge of religious affairs. ¶ *Indeed.* Truly. Certainly. Have they certain evidence, as would appear from their suffering him to speak without interruption. ¶ *The very Christ.* Is truly, or really, the Messiah.

27. *Howbeit.* But. They proceeded to state a reason why they supposed he could not be the Messiah, whatever the rulers might think. ¶ *Whence he is.* We know the place of his birth and residence. ¶ *No man knoweth whence he is.* From Matt. ii. 5, it appears that the common expectation of the Jews was that he would be born at Bethlehem. But they had also feigned that after his birth he would be hidden or taken away in some mysterious manner, and appear again from some unexpected quarter. We find allusions to this expectation in the New Testament, where our Saviour corrects their common notions. Matt. xxiv.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and <sup>1</sup> I am not come of myself, but he that sent me <sup>2</sup> is true, whom <sup>3</sup> ye know not.

29 But <sup>4</sup> I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

30 Then <sup>5</sup> they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 43. <sup>2</sup> Rom. iiii. 4. <sup>3</sup> Ch. i. 18; viii. 55. <sup>4</sup> Ch. x. 15. Matt. xi. 27. <sup>5</sup> Ch. viii. 37. Mark xi. 18. Luke xx. 19.

23. "Then if any man shall say unto you, lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not." And again, ver. 26, "If they shall say unto you, behold he is in the desert, go not forth; behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not." The following extracts from Jewish writings show that this was the common expectation. "The Redeemer shall manifest himself, and afterwards he hid. So it was in the redemption from Egypt. Moses showed himself, and then was hidden." So on the passage, Cant. ii. 9. "My beloved is like a roe or a young hart;" they say, "a roe appears, and then is hid, so the Redeemer shall first appear, and then be concealed, and then again be concealed, and then again appear." "So the Redeemer shall first appear, and then be hid, and then at the end of forty-five days, shall re-appear, and cause manna to descend." (See Lightfoot.) Whatever may have been the source of this opinion, it explains this passage, and shows that the writer of this gospel was well acquainted with the opinions of the Jews, however improbable those opinions were.

28. *Ye know whence I am.* You have sufficient evidence of my divine mission, and that I am the Messiah. ¶ *Is true.* Is worthy to be believed. He has given evidence that I came from him, and he is worthy to be believed. Many read this as a question: Do ye know me, and know whence I am? I am not come of myself, &c.

30. *They sought to take him.* The rulers and their friends. They did this,

31 And many <sup>6</sup> of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

32 ¶ The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet <sup>7</sup> a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

<sup>6</sup> Ch. iv. 39. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xlii. 33; xvi. 16.

1. Because of his reproof; and 2. For professing to be the Messiah. ¶ *His hour.* The proper and the appointed time for his death. See Matt. xxi. 46.

31. *Will he do more miracles?* It was a common expectation that the Messiah would work many miracles. This opinion they founded on such passages as Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. Jesus had given abundant evidence of his power to work such miracles, and they therefore believed that he was the Messiah.

32. ¶ *The people murmured such things.* That is, that the question was agitated whether he was the Messiah; and it excited debate and contention; and that the consequence was, he made many friends. They chose, therefore, if possible, to remove him from them.

33. *Yet a little while am I with you.* It will not be long before my death. This is supposed to have been about six months before his death. This speech of Jesus is full of tenderness. They were seeking his life. He tells them that he is fully aware of it; that he will not be long with them; and implies that they should be diligent to seek him while he was yet with them. He was about to die, but they might now seek his favour and find it. When we remember that this was said to his persecutors and murderers, that it was said even while they were seeking his life, we see the peculiar tenderness of his love. Enmity, and hate, and persecution, did not prevent his offering salvation to them. ¶ *I go unto him that sent me.* This is one of the intimations that he gave that

34 Ye <sup>1</sup> shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed <sup>2</sup> among the <sup>3</sup> Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 21. Hos. v. 6. <sup>2</sup> Isa. xl. 12. Jas. i. 1. 1 Pet. i. 1. <sup>3</sup> Or, *Greeks*.

he would ascend to God. Compare ch. vi. 62.

34. *Ye shall seek me.* This probably means simply, ye shall seek the Messiah. Such shall be your troubles, such the calamities that shall come on the nation, that you will earnestly desire the coming of the Messiah. You will seek for a deliverer, and will look for him that he may bring deliverance. This does not mean that they would seek for Jesus, and not be able to find him; but that they would desire the aid and coming of the Messiah, and would be disappointed. Jesus speaks of himself as the Messiah, and his own name as synonymous with the Messiah. See Notes on Matt. xxiii. 39. ¶ *Shall not find me.* Shall not find the Messiah. He will not come according to your expectations to aid you. See Notes on Matt. xxiv. ¶ *Where I am.* This whole clause is to be understood as future, though the words *am* and *cannot* are both in the present tense. The meaning is, where I shall be, you will not be able to come. That is, he, the Messiah, would be in heaven; and though they would earnestly desire his presence and aid to save the city and nation from the Romans, yet they would not be able to obtain it, represented here by their not being able to come to him. This does not refer to their individual salvation, but to the deliverance of their nation. It is not true of individual sinners that they seek Christ in a proper manner, and are not able to find him. But it was true of the Jewish nation that they looked for the Messiah, and sought his coming to deliver them, but he did not come.

35. *The dispersed among the Gentiles.* To the Jews scattered among the Gentiles, or living in distant parts of the earth. It is well known that at that time there were

36 What *manner* of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

37 In the last <sup>4</sup> day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If <sup>5</sup> any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xxiii. 36. <sup>5</sup> Isa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17.

Jews dwelling in almost every land. There were multitudes in Egypt, in Asia Minor, in Greece, in Rome, &c., and in all these places they had synagogues. The question which they asked was, whether he would leave an ungrateful country, and go into those distant nations, and teach them. ¶ *Gentiles.* In the original, *Greeks*. All those who were not Jews were called *Greeks*, because they were chiefly acquainted with those heathens only who spake the Greek language. It is remarkable that Jesus returned no answer to these inquiries. He rather chose to turn off their minds from a speculation about the place to which he was going, to the great affairs of their own personal salvation.

37. *In the last day.* The eighth day of the festival. ¶ *That great day.* The day of the holy convocation, or solemn assembly. Lev. xxiii. 36. This seems to have been called the great day, 1. Because of the solemn assembly, and because it was the closing scene. 2. Because, according to their traditions, on the previous days they offered sacrifices for the heathen nations as well as for themselves, but on this day for the Jews only. (Lightfoot.) 3. Because, on this day, they abstained from all servile labour, Lev. xxiii. 36, and regarded it as a holy day. 4. On this day they finished the reading of the law, which they commenced at the beginning of the feast. 5. Because on this day probably occurred the ceremony of drawing water from the pool of Siloam. On the last day of the feast it was customary to perform a solemn ceremony in this manner: The priest filled a golden phial with water from the fount of Siloam (see Note ch. ix. 7), which was borne with great solemnity, attended with the clangor of trumpets through the gate of

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out<sup>1</sup> of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iv. 14. Prov. xlviii. 4. Isa. lviii. 11.

the temple; and, being mixed with wine, was poured on the sacrifice on the altar. What was the origin of this custom is unknown. Some suppose, and not improbably, that it arose from an improper understanding of the passage in Isa. xii. 3. It is certain that no such ceremony is commanded by Moses. It is supposed to be probable that Jesus stood and cried while they were performing this ceremony, that he might, 1. Illustrate the nature of his doctrine by this; and, 2. Call off their attention from a rite that was uncommanded, and that could not confer eternal life. ¶ *Jesus stood.* In the temple, in the midst of thousands of the people. ¶ *If any man thirst.* Spiritually. If any man feels his need of salvation. See ch. iv. 13, 14. Matt. v. 6. Rev. xxii. 17. The invitation is full and free to all. ¶ *Let him come unto me, &c.* Instead of depending on this ceremony of drawing water, let him come to me, the Messiah, and he shall find an ever-abundant supply for all the wants of his immortal soul.

38. *He that believeth on me.* He that acknowledges me as the Messiah, and trusts in me for salvation. ¶ *As the scripture hath said.* This is a difficult expression, from the fact that no such expression as follows is to be found literally in the Old Testament. Some have proposed to connect it with what precedes: "He that believeth on me, as the Old Testament has commanded, or required." But to this there are many objections. The natural and obvious meaning here is doubtless the true one; and Jesus probably intended to say, not that there was any particular place in the Old Testament that affirmed this in so many words, but that this was the substance of what the scriptures taught, or this was the spirit of their declarations. Hence the Syriac translates it in the plural, "the scriptures." Probably there is a reference more particularly to Isa. lviii. 11, than to any other single passage: "Thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a

39 (But this spake he of the<sup>2</sup> Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; be

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xvi. 7. Isa. lxiv. 3. Joel ii. 28. Acts ii. 17, 33.

spring of water, whose waters fail not." See also Isa. xlv. 3, 4. Joel iii. 18. ¶ *Out of his belly.* Out of his midst, or out of his heart. The word *belly* is often put for the midst of a thing, the centre, and the heart. Matt. xii. 40. It means, here, that from the man shall flow; that is, his piety shall be of such a nature that it shall extend its blessings to others; it shall be like a running fountain; perhaps in allusion to statues, or ornamented reservoirs in gardens, in which pipes were placed, from which water was continually flowing. The Jews used the same figure: "His two reins are like fountains of water, from which the law flows." And again: "When a man turns himself to the Lord, he shall be as a fountain filled with living water, and his streams shall flow to all the nations and tribes of men." (Kuinol.) ¶ *Rivers.* This word is used to express abundance, or a full supply. It means, that those who are Christians shall diffuse large, and liberal, and constant blessings on their fellow men. And as Jesus immediately explains it, that they shall be the instruments by which the Holy Spirit shall be poured down on the world. ¶ *Living water.* Fountains, ever-flowing streams. That is, the gospel shall be constant and life-giving in its blessings. We learn here, 1. That it is the nature of christian piety to be diffusive. 2. That no man can believe on Jesus who does not desire that others should also, and who will not seek it. 3. That the desire is large and liberal, that the Christian desires the salvation of all the world. 4. That the faith of the believer is to be connected with the influence of the Holy Spirit, and in that way Christians are to be like rivers of living water.

39. *Of the Spirit.* Of the Holy Spirit, that should be sent down to attend their preaching, and to convert sinners. ¶ *Was not yet given.* Was not given in such full and large measures as should be after Jesus had ascended to heaven. Certain measures of the influences of the Spirit had been always given in the conversion

cause that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

40 ¶ Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ<sup>4</sup> cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, <sup>5</sup> where David<sup>6</sup> was?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 14. Dent. xviii. 15, 18. <sup>2</sup> Ch. iv. 42; vi. 69. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 32; ch. i. 46. <sup>4</sup> Psa. cxxii. 11. Jer. xxiii. 5. <sup>5</sup> Mic. v. 2. Luke ii. 4. <sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 5.

and sanctification of the ancient saints and prophets. But that abundant and full effusion which the apostles were permitted afterwards to behold had not yet been given. See Acts ii.; x. 44, 45. ¶ *Jesus was not yet glorified.* Jesus had not yet ascended to heaven, to the glory and honour that awaited him there. It was a part of the arrangement in the work of redemption that the influences of the Holy Spirit should descend chiefly after the death of Jesus, as that death was the procuring cause of this great blessing. Hence he said, ch. xvi. 7, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." See also ver. 8—12, and ch. xiv. 16, 17, 26. Compare Eph. iv. 8—11.

40. *The prophet.* That is, the prophet whom they expected to precede the coming of the Messiah, either Elijah or Jeremiah. See Matt. xvi. 14.

41, 42. See Matt. ii. 4—6. ¶ *Where David was.* 1 Sam. xvi. 1—4.

45, 46. *The officers.* Those who had been appointed, ver. 32, to take him. It seems that Jesus was in the midst of the people, addressing them, and that they happened to come at the very time in which he was speaking. They were so impressed and awed with what he said, that they dared not to take him. There have been few instances of eloquence like this. His speaking had so much evidence of truth, so much proof that he was from God, and was so impressive and per-

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 ¶ Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

<sup>1</sup> Luke iv. 22.

suasive, that they were convinced of his innocence, and they dared not touch him to execute their commission. We have here, 1. A remarkable testimony to the commanding eloquence and truth of Jesus. 2. Wicked men may be awed and restrained by the presence of a good man, and by the evidence that he speaks that which is true. 3. God can preserve his friends. Here were men sent for a particular purpose. They were armed with power. They were commissioned by the highest authority of the nation. On the other hand, Jesus was without arms or armies, and without external protection. Yet, in a manner which the officers and the high priests would have little expected, he was preserved. So, in ways we little expect, God will defend and deliver us, when in the midst of danger. 4. No prophet, apostle, or minister, has ever spoken the truth with as much power, grace, and beauty, as Jesus. It should be ours, therefore, to listen to his words, and to sit at his feet and learn heavenly wisdom.

47. *Are ye also deceived?* They set down the claims of Jesus as of course an imposture. They did not examine, but were, like thousands, determined to believe that he was a deceiver. Hence they did not ask them whether they were convinced, or had seen evidence that he was the Messiah; but with mingled contempt, and envy, and anger, asked if they were also deluded. Thus many assume religion to be an imposture; and when one becomes a Christian, they assume at once



48 Have any of the rulers<sup>1</sup> or of the Pharisees believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 42. Jer. v. 4, 5. 1 Cor. i. 26.

that he is deceived, that he is the victim of foolish credulity or superstition, and treat him with ridicule or scorn. Candour would require them to inquire whether such changes were not proof of the power and truth of the gospel, as candour in the case of the rulers required them to inquire whether Jesus had not given them evidence that he was from God.

48. *The rulers.* The members of the sanhedrim, who were supposed to have control over the religious rites and doctrines of the nation. ¶ *The Pharisees.* The sect possessing wealth, and office, and power. The name *Pharisees* sometimes denotes those who were high in honour and authority. This shows the rule by which they judged of religion: 1. They claimed the right of regulating the doctrines and rites of religion. 2. They repressed the liberty of private judgment, stifled investigation, assumed that a new doctrine must be heresy, and laboured to keep the people in inglorious bondage. 3. They treated the new doctrine of Jesus with contempt, and thus attempted to put it down, not by argument, but by contempt, and especially because it was embraced chiefly by the common people. This is the way in which doctrines contrary to the truth of God have been uniformly supported in the world; this is the way in which new views of truth are met, and this the way in which those in ecclesiastical power often attempt to lord it over God's heritage, and to repress the investigation of the bible.

49. *This people.* The word here translated *people* is the one commonly rendered the multitude. It is a word expressive of contempt, or, as we would say, the rabble. It denotes the scorn which they felt that the people should presume to judge for themselves in a case pertaining to their own salvation. ¶ *Who knoweth not the law.* Who have not been instructed in the schools of the Pharisees, and been taught to interpret the Old Testament as they had. They supposed that any who believed on the humble and despised Jesus must be of course ignorant of the

50 Nicodemus saith unto them. (he that came<sup>2</sup> to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

<sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 1, 2; xix. 39. <sup>3</sup> To him.

true doctrines of the Old Testament, as they held that a very different Messiah from him was foretold. Many instances are preserved in the writings of the Jews of the great contempt in which the Pharisees held the common people. It may here be remarked that Christianity is the only system of religion ever presented to man that in a proper manner regarded the poor, the ignorant, and the needy. Philosophers and Pharisees, in all ages, have looked on them with contempt. ¶ *Are cursed.* Are execrable; are of no account; are worthy only of contempt and perdition. Some suppose that there is reference here to their being worthy to be cut off from the people for believing on him, or worthy to be put out of the synagogue. See ch. ix. 22. But it seems to be an expression only of contempt; a declaration that they were a rabble, ignorant, unworthy of notice, and going to ruin. Observe, however, 1. That of this despised people were chosen most of those who became Christians. 2. That the people were ignorant, it was the fault of the Pharisees and rulers. It was their business to see that they were taught. 3. There is no way so common of attempting to oppose Christianity as by ridiculing its friends as poor, and ignorant, and weak, and credulous. As well might food, clothing, and friendship, and piety, be held in contempt because the poor eat the one, or possess the other.

50. *Nicodemus.* See ch. iii. 1. ¶ *One of them.* That is, one of the great council, or sanhedrim. God often places one more pious man in legislative assembly to vindicate his honour and his law. As he often gives a man grace on such occasions boldly to defend his cause, to put men upon their proof, and to confound the proud and the domineering. We see in this case, also, that a man, at one time timid and fearful, may on other occasions be bold, and fearlessly defend the truth as it is in Jesus. This example should lead every man entrusted with authority or office, fearlessly to defend the truth of God; and when the rich and the mighty

51 Doth<sup>1</sup> our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee<sup>2</sup> ariseth no prophet.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

### CHAPTER VIII.

*The woman taken in adultery, 1—11.*

*Christ the light of the world, 12—30.*

*He promises freedom, 31, 32. The empty boast of the Jews, 33—47. They*

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xvii. 8—11; xix. 15—16. Prov. xviii. 13. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 41. ch. i. 46. Isa. ix. 1, 2. Matt. iv. 15, 16.

are pouring contempt on Jesus and his cause, to stand forth as its fearless defender.

51. *Doth our law, &c.* The law required justice to be done, and gave every man an opportunity of a fair and impartial trial. Exod. xxiii. 1, 2. Lev. xix. 15, 16. Deut. xix. 15, 18. Their condemnation of Jesus was a violation of every rule of right. He was not arraigned, was not heard in self-defence, and not a single witness was adduced. Nicodemus demanded that justice should be done, and that he should not be condemned until he had had a fair trial. Every man should be presumed to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty. This is a maxim of law, and this is a most just and proper precept in our judgments in private life.

52. *Art thou also of Galilee?* Here is another expression of contempt. To be a Galilean was a term of the highest reproach. They knew well he was not of Galilee, but they meant to ask whether he also had become a follower of the despised Galilean. Ridicule is not argument, and there is no demonstration in a jibe; but unhappily this is the only weapon which the proud and haughty often use in opposing religion. ¶ *Ariseth no prophet.* That is, there is no prediction that any prophet should come out of Galilee, and especially no prophet that was to attend or precede the Messiah. Compare ch. i. 46. They assumed, therefore, that Jesus could not be the Christ.

*revile Jesus as a Samaritan, &c. 48; and seek to destroy him for supposed blasphemy, 49—59.*

**J**ESUS went unto the mount of Olives.

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery; in the very act.

53. *And every man, &c.* There is every mark of confusion and disorder in this breaking up of the sanhedrim. It is possible that some of the Sadducees might have joined Nicodemus in opposing the Pharisees, and thus increased the disorder. It is a most instructive and melancholy exhibition of the influence of pride, envy, contempt, and anger, when brought to bear on an inquiry, and when they are manifestly opposed to candour, to argument, and to truth. So wild and furious are the passions of men when they oppose the person and claims of the Son of God! It is remarkable, too, how God accomplishes his purposes. They wished to destroy Jesus. God suffered their passions to be excited, a tumult to ensue, the assembly thus to break up in disorder, and Jesus to be safe, for his time had not yet come. The wrath of man shall praise him: the remainder of wrath shall he restrain. Psa. lxxvi. 10.

### CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Mount of Olives.* The mountain about a mile directly east of Jerusalem. See Note, Matt. xxi. 1. This was the place in which Jesus probably often passed the night when attending the feasts at Jerusalem. The garden of Gethsemane, to which he was accustomed to resort, ch. xviii. 2, was on the western side of that mountain; and Bethany, the abode of Martha and Mary, on its east side. Ch. xi. 1.

5 Now <sup>1</sup> Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6 This they said tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 21—24. Ezek. xvi. 38—40; xxiii. 47.

5. *Moses in the law, &c.* The punishment of adultery commanded by Moses was death. Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22. The particular manner of the death was not specified in the law. The Jews had themselves, in the time of Christ, determined that the mode should be by stoning. See this described in the Notes on Matt. xxi. 35, 44. The punishment for adultery varied. In some cases it was strangling. In the time of Ezekiel, Ezek. xvi. 38—40, it was stoning, and being thrust through with a sword. If the adulteress was the daughter of a priest, the punishment was being burned to death.

6. *Tempting him.* Trying him, or laying a plan that they might have occasion to accuse him. If he decided the case, they expected to be able to bring an accusation against him. For if he decided that she ought to die, they might accuse him of claiming power which belonged to the Romans, the power of life and death. They might allege that it was not the giving an opinion about an abstract case, but that she was formally before him, that he decided her case judicially, and that without authority or form of trial. If he decided otherwise, they would have alleged that he denied the authority of the law, and that it was his intention to abrogate it. They had had a controversy with him about the authority of the sabbath, and they perhaps supposed that he would decide this case as he did that, against them. It may be further added, that they knew that Jesus admitted publicans and sinners to eat with him; that one of their charges was that he was friendly to sinners, see Luke xv. 2; and they wished, doubtless, to make it appear that he was gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, and a friend of sinners, and disposed to relax all the laws of morality, even in the case of adultery. Seldom was there a plan more artfully laid, and never was

ground, as though he heard them not.

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, <sup>2</sup> let him first cast a stone at her.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xvii. 7. Rom. ii. 1, 22.

more wisdom and knowledge of human nature displayed than in the manner in which it was met. ¶ *Wrote on the ground.* This took place in the temple. The *ground*, here, means the pavement, or the dust on the pavement. By this, Jesus showed them clearly that he was not solicitous to pronounce an opinion in the case, and that it was not his wish or intention to intermeddle with the civil affairs of the nation. ¶ *As though he heard them not.* This is added by the translators. It is not in the original, and should not have been added. There is no intimation in the original, as it seems to be implied by this addition, that the object was to convey the impression that he did not hear them. What was his object is unknown, and conjecture is useless. The most probable reason seems to be that he did not wish to intermeddle; that he designed to show no solicitude to decide the case; and that he did not mean to decide it unless he was constrained to do so.

7. *They continued asking him.* They pressed the question upon him. They were determined to extort an answer from him, and showed a perseverance in evil which has been unhappily often imitated. ¶ *Is without sin.* That is, without this particular sin; he who has not himself been guilty of this very crime, for in this place the connexion evidently demands this meaning. ¶ *Let him first cast a stone at her.* In the punishment by death, one of the witnesses threw the culprit from the scaffold, and the other threw the first stone, or rolled down a stone to crush him. See Deut. xvii. 6, 7. This was in order that the witness might feel his responsibility in giving evidence, as he was also to be the executioner. Jesus, therefore, put them to the test. Without pronouncing on her case, he directed them, if any of them were inno-

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: <sup>1</sup> and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman,

<sup>1</sup> Job v. 12, 13; xx. 5, 27. Psa. lx. 15, 16; lxxi. 13. Luke xiii. 17.

cent to perform the office of executioner. This was said evidently well knowing their guilt, and well knowing that no one would dare to do it.

9. *The eldest.* As being conscious of more sins, and being desirous to leave the Lord Jesus. The word *eldest* here probably refers not to age but to honour. From those who were in highest reputation to the lowest in rank. This consciousness of crime showed that the state of the public morals was exceedingly corrupt, and justified the declaration of Jesus that it was an "adulterous and wicked generation." Matt. xvi. 4. ¶ *Alone.* Jesus only was left with the woman, &c. ¶ *In the midst.* Her accusers had gone out, and left Jesus and the woman. But it is by no means probable that the people had left them, and as this was in the temple on a public occasion, they were doubtless surrounded still by many. This is evident from the fact that Jesus immediately, ver. 12, addressed a discourse to the people present.

10. *No man condemned thee?* Jesus had directed them, if innocent, to cast a stone, thus to condemn her, or to use the power which he gave them to condemn her. No one of them had done that. They had accused her, but they had not proceeded to the act expressive of judicial condemnation.

11. *Neither do I condemn thee.* This is evidently to be taken in the sense of judicial condemnation, or of passing sentence as a magistrate; for this was what they had arraigned her for. It was not to obtain his opinion about adultery, but to obtain the condemnation of this woman. As he claimed no civil authority, he said

where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn <sup>2</sup> thee: go, and sin <sup>2</sup> no more.

12 ¶ Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I <sup>4</sup> am the light of the world: he that <sup>5</sup> followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 17. <sup>3</sup> Ch. v. 14. <sup>4</sup> Ch. i. 4-9; iii. 19; ix. 5. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xii. 35, 46.

that he did not exercise it, and should not condemn her to die. In this sense the word is used in the previous verse, and this is the only sense which the passage demands. Besides, what follows shows that this was his meaning. ¶ *Go, and sin no more.* You have sinned. You have been detected and accused. The sin is great. But I do not claim power to condemn you to die, and as your accusers have left you, my direction to you is that you sin no more. This passage therefore teaches us: 1. That Jesus claimed no civil authority. 2. That he regarded the action of which they accused her as sin. 3. That he knew the hearts and lives of men. 4. That men are often very zealous in accusing others of that of which they themselves are guilty. And, 5. That Jesus was endowed with wonderful wisdom in meeting the devices of his enemies, and eluding their deep-laid plans to involve him in ruin.

It should be added that this passage, together with the last verse of the preceding chapter, has been by many critics thought to be spurious. It is wanting in many of the ancient manuscripts and versions, and has been rejected by Erasmus, Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Wetstein, Tittman, Knapp, and many others. It is not easy to decide the question whether it be a genuine part of the New Testament or not. Some have supposed that it was not written by the evangelists, but was often related by them, and that after a time it was recorded, and introduced by Papias into the sacred text.

12. *I am the light of the world.* See Note, ch. i. 4, 9.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou<sup>1</sup> bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but<sup>2</sup> ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 31—47.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 28; ix. 29,

30.

13. *Thou bearest record of thyself.* Thou art a witness for thyself, or in thy own case. See ch. v. 31. The law required two witnesses in a criminal case, and they alleged that as the only evidence which Jesus had was his own assertion, it could not be entitled to belief. ¶ *Is not true.* Is not worthy of belief, or is not substantiated by sufficient evidence.

14. *Jesus answered, &c.* To this objection Jesus replied by saying, first, that the case was such as that his testimony alone ought to be received; and secondly, that he had the evidence given him by his Father. Though in common life, in courts, and in mere human transactions, it was true that a man ought not to give evidence in his own case, yet in this instance such was the nature of the case that his word was worthy to be believed. ¶ *My record.* My evidence, my testimony. ¶ *Is true.* Is worthy to be believed. ¶ *For I know whence I came—but ye, &c.* I know by what authority I act; I know by whom I am sent, and what commands were given me; but you cannot determine this, for you do not know these unless I testify them to you.

We are to remember that Jesus came not of himself, ch. vi. 38; that he came not to do his own will, but the will of his Father. He came as a witness of those things which he had seen and known, ch. iii. 11, and no one could judge of those things, for no man had seen them. As he came from heaven, as he knew his Father's will, as he had seen the eternal world, and known the counsels of his Father, so his testimony was worthy of confidence. As they had not seen and known these things, they were not qualified to judge. An ambassador from a foreign court knows the will and purposes

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I<sup>3</sup> judge no man.

16 And yet if I judge, <sup>4</sup> my judgment is true: for <sup>5</sup> I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

17 It is also written <sup>6</sup> in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. iii. 17; xii. 47.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps.

xlv. 6, 7; lxxii. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ver. 29; ch. xvi. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15.

of the sovereign who sent him, and is competent to bear witness of them. The court to which he is sent has no way of judging but by his testimony, and he is therefore competent to testify in the case. All that can be demanded is that he give his credentials that he is appointed; and this Jesus had done both by the nature of his doctrine and his miracles.

15. *After the flesh.* According to appearance, according to your carnal and corrupt mode, not according to the spiritual nature of the doctrines. By your preconceived opinions and prejudices you are determined not to believe that I am the Messiah. ¶ *I judge no man.* Jesus came not to condemn the world, ch. iii. 17. They were in the habit of judging rashly and harshly of all. But this was not the purpose or disposition of the Saviour. This expression is to be understood as meaning that he judged no one after their manner; he did not come to censure and condemn men after the appearance, or in a harsh, biased, and unkind manner.

16. *And yet if I judge.* If I should express my judgment of men, or things. He was not limited, or forbidden to judge, or restrained by any fear that his judgment would be erroneous. ¶ *My judgment is true.* Is worthy to be regarded. ¶ *For I am not alone.* I concur with the Father who hath sent me. His judgment you admit would be right, and my judgment would accord with his. He was commissioned by his Father, and his judgment would coincide with all that God had purposed or revealed. This was shown by the evidence that God gave that he had sent him into the world.

17. *In your law.* Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15. Compare Matt. xviii. 16. This re-

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father <sup>1</sup> that sent me beareth witness of me.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye <sup>2</sup> neither know me, nor my Father: if <sup>3</sup> ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 37. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 55; ch. xvi. 3; xvii. 25. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xiv. 7, 9.

lated to cases in which the life of an individual was involved. Jesus says that if in such a case the testimony of two men were sufficient to establish a fact, his own testimony and that of his Father ought to be esteemed ample evidence in the case of religious doctrine. ¶ *Two men.* If two men could confirm a case, the evidence of Jesus and of God ought not to be deemed insufficient. ¶ *Is true.* In Deuteronomy, the word is *established*. Both words mean the same thing. It is confirmed; is worthy of belief.

18. *I am one that bear witness of myself.* In human courts a man is not allowed to bear witness of himself, because he has a personal interest in the case, and the court could have no proof of the impartiality of the evidence. But in the case of Jesus it was otherwise. When one has no party ends to serve, when he is willing to deny himself; when he makes great sacrifices; and when by his life he gives every evidence of sincerity, his own testimony may be admitted in evidence of his motives and designs. This was the case with Jesus and his apostles. And though in a legal or criminal case such testimony would not be admitted, yet in an argument on moral subjects, about the will and purpose of him who sent him, it would not be right to reject the testimony of one who gave so many proofs that he came from God. ¶ *The Father—beareth witness of me.* By the voice at his baptism, and by the miracles which Jesus wrought, as well as by the prophecies of the Old Testament. We may here remark: 1. That there is a distinction between the Father and the Son. They are both represented as bearing testimony. Yet, 2. They are not divided. They are not different beings. They bear testimony

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, <sup>4</sup> as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for <sup>5</sup> his hour was not yet come.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye <sup>6</sup> shall seek me, and <sup>7</sup> shall die in your

<sup>4</sup> Mark xii. 41. <sup>5</sup> Ch. vii. 30. Ch. vii. 34. <sup>6</sup> Job xx. 11. Psa. lxxiii. 18—20. Prov. xiv. 32. Isa. lxxv. 20. Eph. ii. 1.

to the same thing, and are one in counsel, in plan, in essence, and in glory.

19. *Where is thy Father?* This question was asked doubtless in derision. Jesus had often given them to understand that by his Father he meant God, ch. v., vi. They professed to be ignorant of this, and probably looked round in contempt for his father, that he might adduce him as a witness in the case. ¶ *If ye had known me, &c.* If you had listened to my instructions, and had received me as the Messiah, you would also at the same time have been acquainted with God. We may here observe: 1. The manner in which Jesus answered them. He gave no heed to their cavil; he was not irritated by their contempt; he preserved his dignity, and gave them an answer worthy of the Son of God. 2. We should meet the cavils and sneers of sinners in the same manner. We should not render railing for railing, but "in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." 2 Tim. ii. 25. 3. The way to know God is to know Jesus Christ. Ch. i. 18. No sinner can have just views of God but in Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

20. *The treasury.* See Note, Matt. xxi. 12. ¶ *His hour was not yet come.* The time for him to die had not yet arrived, and God restrained them, and kept his life. This proves that God has power over wicked men to keep them and control them, and to make them accomplish his own purposes.

21. *I go my way.* See Note, ch. vii. 33. ¶ *Ye shall die in your sins.* That is, you will seek the Messiah. You will desire his coming. But the Messiah that you expect will not come, and as you have rejected me, and there is no other Saviour

sins: whither I go, ye <sup>1</sup> cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? Because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, <sup>2</sup> Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvi. 28. <sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 14; iii. 13, 31. Rom. viii. 7, 8. 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48.

you must die in your sins. You will die unpardoned, and as you did not seek me where you might find me, you cannot come where I shall be. Observe, 1. All those who reject the Lord Jesus must die unforgiven. There is no way of salvation but by him. See Notes on Acts iv. 12. 2. There will be a time when sinners will seek for a Saviour, but will find none. Often this is done, too late, in a dying moment; and in the future world they may seek a deliverer, but not be able to find one. 3. Those who reject the Lord Jesus must perish. Where he is, they cannot come. Where he is, is heaven. Where he is not, with his favour and mercy, there is hell; and the sinner that has no Saviour must be wretched for ever.

22. *Will he kill himself?* It is difficult to know whether this question was asked from ignorance, or malice. Self-murder was esteemed then, as it is now, as one of the greatest crimes; and it is not improbable that they asked this question with mingled hatred and contempt. He is a deceiver, he has broken the law of Moses, he is mad, and it is probable he will go on and kill himself. If this was their meaning, we see the wonderful patience of Jesus in enduring the contradiction of sinners. And as he bore contempt without rendering railing for railing, so should we.

23. *Ye are from beneath.* The expression *from beneath* here is opposed to the phrase *from above*. It means, you are of the earth, or are influenced by earthly, sensual, and corrupt passions. You are governed by the lowest and vilest views and feelings, such as are opposed to heaven, and such as have their origin in earth or in hell. ¶ *I am from above.* From heaven. My views are heavenly, and my words should have been so inter-

24 I said <sup>3</sup> therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for <sup>4</sup> if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.

25 Then said they unto him. Who art thou? <sup>5</sup> And Jesus saith unto them, <sup>6</sup> Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 21. <sup>4</sup> Mark xvi. 16. Acts iv. 12. <sup>5</sup> Ch. i. 12, 22; x. 24. Luke xxii. 67. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 12; ch. v. 17, 19—47.

preted. ¶ *Ye are of this world.* You think and act like the corrupt men of this world. ¶ *I am not of this world.* My views are above these earthly and corrupt notions. The meaning of the verse is, "Your reference to self-murder shows that you are earthly and corrupt in your views. You are governed by the mad passions of men, and can think only of these." We see here how difficult it is to excite wicked men to the contemplation of heavenly things. They interpret all things in a low and corrupt sense, and suppose all others to be governed as they are themselves.

24. *That I am he.* That I am the Messiah.

25. *Who art thou?* As Jesus did not expressly say in the previous verse that he was the Messiah, they professed still not to understand him. "In great contempt, therefore, they asked him who he was. As if they had said, 'Who art thou that undertakest to threaten us in this manner?' When we remember that they regarded him as a mere pretender from Galilee, that he was poor, and without friends, and that he was persecuted by those in authority, we cannot but admire the patience with which all this was borne, and the coolness with which he answered them. ¶ *Even the same*, &c. What he had professed to them was, that he was the light of the world, ver. 12, that he was the bread that came down from heaven, that he was sent by his Father, &c. From all this they might easily gather that he claimed to be the Messiah. He assumed no new character, he made no change in his professions, he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And as he had once professed to be the light of the world, so in the face of contempt, persecution, and death, he adhered to the profession.

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but <sup>1</sup> he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up <sup>2</sup> the Son of man, then shall ye know that I

am *he*, <sup>3</sup> and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many <sup>4</sup> believed on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 28. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xiii. 14; xii. 32—34; xix. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. vi. 39; xi. 42; xii. 49, 50. Num. xvi. 26—30. Heb. ii. 2, 3. <sup>4</sup> Ch. x. 42.

¶ *The beginning.* From the first discourse with them, or uniformly.

26. *I have many things to say.* There are many things which I might say, to reprove and expose your pride and hypocrisy. By this he implied that he understood well their character, and he was able to expose it. This indeed he had shown them in his conversations with them.

¶ *And to judge of you.* To reprove in you. There are many things in you which I might condemn. ¶ *But he that sent me, is true.* Is worthy to be believed, and his declarations about men are to be credited. The meaning of this verse may be thus expressed: "I have indeed many things to say blaming or condemning you. I have already said many such things, and there are many more that I might say. But I speak only these things which God has commanded. I speak not of myself. I come to execute his commission, and he is worthy to be heard and feared. Let it not be thought, therefore, that my judgment is rash or harsh. It is such as is commanded by God."

27. *They understood not.* They knew not; or they were unwilling to receive him as a messenger from God. They doubtless understood that he meant to speak of God, but they were unwilling to acknowledge that he really came from God.

28. *When ye have lifted up.* When you have crucified. See Note, ch. iii. 14; also ch. xii. 32. ¶ *The Son of man.* See Note, Matt. viii. 19, 20. ¶ *Then shall ye know.* Then shall you have evidence or proof. ¶ *That I am he.* Am the Messiah, which I have professed to be. ¶ *And that I do nothing of myself.* That

is, you shall have proof that God has sent me; that I am the Messiah, and that God concurs with me, and approves my doctrine. This proof was furnished by the miracles that attended the death of Jesus, the earthquake, and darkness; but chiefly by his resurrection from the dead, which proved beyond a doubt that he was what he affirmed he was, the Messiah.

29. *Is with me.* In working miracles, &c. ¶ *Hath not left me alone.* Though men had forsaken and rejected him, yet God attended him. ¶ *Those things that please him.* See Isa. liii. 10—12. Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5. Luke iii. 22. Phil. ii. 8. 2 Pet. i. 17. His undertaking the work of redemption was pleasing to God, and he had the consciousness that in executing it he did those things which God approved. It is a small matter to have men opposed to us, if we have a conscience void of offence, and evidence that we please God. Compare Heb. xi. 5.

30. *Many believed on him.* Such was the convincing nature and force of the truths which he presented, that they believed he was the Messiah, and received his doctrine. This was the proper effect of preaching the gospel. While there were many that became more obstinate and hardened under it, there were many also who by the same truth were made penitent and believing. "The same sun that hardens the clay, softens the wax." (Clarke.)

31. *If ye continue in my word.* If you continue to obey my commandments, and receive my doctrines. ¶ *Then are ye,* &c. This is the true test of Christian character. Ch. xiv. 21. See 1 John ii. 4; iii. 24. 2 John 6. In this place Jesus cautions them against too much confidence



which believed on him, If ye continue <sup>1</sup> in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know <sup>2</sup> the truth, and the truth shall make you free. <sup>3</sup>

33 ¶ They answered him, We

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii. 7. Col. i. 23. Heb. x. 38, 39.  
<sup>2</sup> Hos. vi. 3. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvii. 17. Psa. cxix. 45.  
Rom. vi. 14, 18, 22. Jas. i. 25; ii. 12.

from their present feelings. They were just converted, converted under a single sermon. They had had no time to test their faith. Jesus assures them that if their faith should abide the test, if it should produce obedience to his commandments, and a holy life, it would be proof that their faith was genuine, for the tree is known by its fruit. So we may say to all new converts. Do not repress your love or your joy. But do not be too confident. Your faith has not yet been tried; and if it does not produce a holy life, it is vain. Jas. ii. 17—26.

32. *Shall know the truth.* See Note, ch. vii. 17. ¶ *The truth shall make you free.* The truth here means the christian religion. Compare Gal. iii. 1. Col. i. 6. The doctrines of the true religion shall make you free. That is, it shall free you from the slavery of evil passions, corrupt propensities, and grovelling views. The condition of a sinner is that of a captive or a slave to sin. He is one who serves and obeys the dictates of an evil heart, and the promptings of an evil nature. Acts viii. 23. Rom. vi. 16, 17, 19, 20; vii. 6, 8, 11; viii. 21. Gal. iv. 3, 9. The effect of the gospel is to break this hard bondage to sin, and set the sinner free. We learn from this that religion is not slavery or oppression. It is true freedom,

"He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,  
And all are slaves beside.

The service of God is freedom from degrading vices and carnal propensities; from the slavery of passion and inordinate desires. It is a cheerful and delightful surrender of ourselves to Him whose yoke is easy, and whose burden is light.

33. *They answered him.* Not those who believed on him, but some who stood by and heard him. ¶ *We be Abraham's seed.* We are the children or descend-

ants of Abraham's seed, and were never in <sup>4</sup> bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever <sup>5</sup> committeth sin is the servant of sin.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xxv. 42. <sup>5</sup> Rom. vi. 16, 29. 2 Pet. ii. 19.

ants of Abraham. Abraham was not a slave; and they pretended that they were his real descendants, inheriting his freedom as well as his spirit. They meant that they were the direct descendants of Abraham by Isaac, his heir. Ishmael, also Abraham's son, was the son of a bond-woman, Gal. iv. 21—23; but they were descended in a direct line from the acknowledged heir of Abraham. ¶ *Never in bondage to any man.* This is a most remarkable declaration, and one evidently false. Their fathers had been slaves in Egypt; their nation had been enslaved in Babylon; it had repeatedly been subject to the Assyrians; it was enslaved by Herod the Great; and was at the very time they spoke groaning under the grievous and insupportable bondage of the Romans. But we see here: 1. That Jesus was right when he said, ver. 44, "Ye are of your father the devil; he is a liar, and the father of it." 2. Men will say any thing, however false or ridiculous, to avoid and oppose the truth. 3. Men groaning under the most oppressive bondage are often unwilling to acknowledge it in any manner, and are indignant at being charged with it. This is the case with all sinners. 4. Sin, and the bondage to sin, produces passion, irritation, and a troubled soul; and a man under the influence of passion regards little what he says, and is often a liar. 5. There is need of the gospel. That only can make men free, calm, collected, meek, and lovers of truth. And as every man is by nature the servant of sin, he should, without delay, seek an interest in that gospel, which only can make him free.

34. *Whosoever committeth sin, &c.* In this passage Jesus shows them that he did not refer to political bondage, but to the slavery of the soul to evil passions and

35 And the servant <sup>1</sup> abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.

36 If <sup>2</sup> the Son therefore, shall make you free, ye <sup>3</sup> shall be free indeed.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, be-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 30.    <sup>2</sup> Isa. lxi. 1.    <sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 2. Gal. v. 1.

desires. ¶ *Is the servant.* Is the slave of sin. He is bound to it as a slave is to his master.

35. *The servant abideth not, &c.* The slave does not of course remain for ever, or till his death, with his master. If he is disobedient and wicked, the master sells him or turns him away. He is not the heir, and may at any time be expelled from the house of his master. But a son is the heir. He cannot be, in this manner, cast off or sold. He is privileged with the right of remaining in the family. This takes place in common life. So said the Saviour to the Jews: you, if you are disobedient and rebellious, may at any time be rejected from being the people of God, and be deprived of your peculiar privileges as a nation. You are in the condition of servants, and unless you are made free by the gospel, and become entitled to the privilege of the sons of God, you will be cast off like an unfaithful slave. Compare Heb. iii. 5, 6. ¶ *Abideth not.* Remains not, or has not the legal right to remain. He may at any time be rejected or sold. ¶ *In the house.* In the family of his master. ¶ *For ever.* During the whole time of his life. ¶ *The son.* The heir. He remains, and cannot be sold or cast off. ¶ *Ever.* Continually. Till the day of his death. This is the privilege of a son, to inherit and dispose of the property.

36. *If the Son, &c.* The Son of God—heir of all things—who is for ever with God, and who has therefore the right and power to liberate men from their thralldom. ¶ *Shall make you free.* Shall deliver you from the bondage and dominion of sin. ¶ *Free indeed.* Truly and really free. You shall be blessed with the most valuable freedom, not from the chains and oppressions of earthly masters and monarchs, but from the bondage of sin.

37. *I know, &c.* I admit that you are

cause my word hath no place in you.

38 I <sup>4</sup> speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham <sup>5</sup> is our father. Je-

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xiv. 10, 24.    <sup>5</sup> Matt. iii. 9.

the descendants of Abraham. Jesus did not wish to call that in question, but he endeavoured to show them that they might be his descendants, and still lack entirely his spirit. See Note Matt. iii. 9. ¶ *Ye seek to kill me.* Ch. v. 16; vii. 32. ¶ *Because my word.* My doctrine; the principles of my religion. You have not the spirit of my doctrine; you hate it, and you therefore seek to kill me. ¶ *Hath no place.* That is, you do not embrace my doctrine, or it exerts no influence over you. The original word conveys the notion that there was no room for his doctrine in their minds. It met with obstructions, and did not penetrate into their hearts. They were so filled with pride, and prejudice, and false notions, that they would not receive his truth. And as they had not his truth or spirit, and could not bear it, they sought to kill him.

38. *I speak, &c.* Ch. iii. 11—13. ¶ *My Father.* God. ¶ *Your father.* The devil. See ver. 44. To *see* here means to learn of. They had learned of, or been taught by the devil, and imitated him.

39. *Abraham is our father.* We are descended from Abraham. Of this the Jews boasted much, as being descended from such an illustrious man. See Notes on Matt. iii. 9. As Jesus did not expressly say whom he meant, ver. 38, when he said they did the works of their father, they obstinately persisted in pretending not to understand him, as if they had said. "We acknowledge no other father but Abraham, and to charge us with being the offspring of another is slander and calumny." ¶ *If ye were Abraham's children.* The words *sons* and *children* are often used to denote those who imitate another, or who have his spirit. See Note, Matt. i. 1. Here it means, "if you were worthy to be called

Jesus saith unto them, If<sup>1</sup> ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this<sup>2</sup> did not Abraham.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ii. 28, 29; ix. 7. Gal. iii. 7, 28.  
<sup>2</sup> Rom. iv. 12.

the children of Abraham, or if you had his spirit."

40. *Ye seek to kill me.* See ver. 37. ¶ *This did not Abraham.* Or such things Abraham did not do. There are two things noted here in which they differed from Abraham: 1. In seeking to kill him, or possessing a murderous and bloody purpose. 2. In rejecting the truth as God revealed it. Abraham was distinguished for love to man as well as to God. He liberated the captives, Gen. xiv. 14—16; was distinguished for hospitality to strangers, Gen. xviii. 1—8; and received the revelations of God to him, however mysterious or however trying their observance. Gen. xii. 1—4; xv. 4—6; xxii. It was for these things that he is so much commended in the New Testament, Rom. iv. 9; Gal. iii. 6; and as the Jews sought to kill Jesus instead of treating him hospitably and kindly, they showed that they had none of the spirit of Abraham.

41. *The deeds of your father.* See ver. 38. Jesus repeats the charge, and yet repeats it as if unwilling to name Satan as their father. He chose that they should infer whom he meant, rather than bring a charge so direct and repelling. When the Saviour delivered an awful or an offensive truth, he always approached the mind so that the truth might make the deepest impression. ¶ *Of fornication.* The people still professed not to understand him. And since Jesus had denied that they were the children of Abraham, they affected to suppose that he meant they were a mixed, spurious race; that they had no right to the covenant privileges of the Jews; that they were not worshippers of the true God. Hence they said, we are not thus descended. We have the evidence of our genealogy. We are worshippers of the true God, de-

We be not born of fornication; we<sup>2</sup> have one Father, even God.

42 Jesus said unto them, If<sup>3</sup> God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but<sup>4</sup> he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my<sup>5</sup> word.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. lxiii. 16; lxiv. 8. <sup>4</sup> Mal. i. 6. 1 John v. 1. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xvii. 8, 23. <sup>6</sup> Isa. vi. 2.

scended from those who acknowledged him, and we acknowledge no other God and Father than him. To be children of fornication is an expression in the scriptures denoting idolatry or worship of other gods than the true God. Isa. i. 21; lvii. 8. Hos. i. 2; ii. 4. This they denied. They affirmed that they acknowledged no God for their Father but the true God.

42. *If God were your Father.* If you had the Spirit of God, or love to him, or were worthy to be called his children. ¶ *Ye would love me.* Jesus was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Heb. i. 3. "Every one that loveth him that begot, loveth him that is begotten of him." 1 John v. 1. From this we see: 1. That all who truly love God love his Son Jesus Christ. 2. That men that pretend they love God, and reject his Son, have no evidence that they are the friends of God. 3. That those who reject the Bible cannot be the friends of God. If they loved God, they would love Him who came from Him, and who bears his image.

43. *Why do ye not, &c.* My meaning is clear if you were disposed to understand me. ¶ *Even because ye cannot hear my words.* The word *hear* in this place is to be understood in the sense of bear, or tolerate, as in ch. vi. 60. His doctrine was offensive to them. They hated it, and hence they perverted his meaning, and were resolved not to understand him. Their pride, vanity, and wickedness opposed it. The reason why sinners do not understand the Bible and its doctrine is because they cannot bear them. They hate them, and their hatred produces want of candour, a disposition to evil and to pervert the truth, and an ultimate purpose that it shall not be applied to

44 Ye<sup>1</sup> are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode<sup>2</sup> not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.<sup>3</sup> When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 38. <sup>1</sup> John iii. 8. <sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 4-6. Jude 6. <sup>3</sup> Gen. iii. 4, 5. <sup>2</sup> Chron. xviii. 20-22. Job i. 11; ii. 4-6. Acts v. 3.

their case. Hence they embrace every form of false doctrine, and choose error rather than truth, and darkness rather than light. A disposition to believe God is one of the best helps for understanding the Bible.

44. *Of your father the devil.* That is, you have the temper, disposition, or spirit of the devil. You are influenced by him, you imitate him, and ought, therefore, to be called his children. See also Acts xiii. 10, "Thou child of the devil." 1 John iii. 8-10. ¶ *The devil.* See Note, Matt. iv. 1. ¶ *The lusts.* The desires, or the wishes. You do what pleases him. ¶ *Ye will do.* The word *will* here is not an auxiliary verb. It does not simply express futurity, or that such a thing will take place, but it implies an act of volition. This you will, or choose to do. The same mode of speech occurs in ch. v. 40. In what respects they showed that they were the children of the devil he proceeds to state: 1. In their murderous disposition. 2. In rejecting the truth. 3. In being favourable to falsehood and error. ¶ *He was a murderer from the beginning.* That is, from the beginning of the world, or the first records there are of him. This refers to the seduction of Adam and Eve. Death was denounced against sin. Gen. ii. 17. The devil deceived our first parents, and they became subject to death. Gen. iii. As he was the cause why death came into the world, he may be said to have been a murderer in that act, or from the beginning. We see here, by the way, that the tempter mentioned in Gen. iii. was Satan, or the devil, who is here declared to have been the murderer. Compare Rom. v. 12, and Rev. xii. 9. Besides, Satan has in all ages deceived men, and been the cause of their spiritual and eternal death. His work has been to destroy; and in the

own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

45 And because<sup>4</sup> I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

46 Which of you convinceth<sup>5</sup> me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47 He that is of God heareth

<sup>4</sup> Gal. iv. 16. <sup>2</sup> Thess. ii. 10. <sup>5</sup> Heb. iv. 15.

worst sense of the word he may be said to have been a murderer. It was by his instigation also that Cain killed his brother. 1 John iii. 12. As the Jews endeavoured to kill the Saviour, so they showed that they had the spirit of the devil. ¶ *Abode not in the truth.* He departed from the truth, or was false, and a liar. ¶ *No truth in him.* That is, he is a liar. It is his nature and his work to deceive. ¶ *He speaketh of his own.* The word *own* is in the plural number, and means of the things that are appropriate to him, or that belong to his nature. His speaking falsehood is originated by his own propensities or disposition; he utters the expressions of his genuine character. ¶ *He is a liar.* As when he deceived Adam, and in his deceiving, as far as possible, the world, and dragging man down to perdition. ¶ *The father of it.* The father, or originator of falsehood. The word *it* refers to lie, or falsehood understood. From him falsehood first proceeded, and all liars possess his spirit, and are under his influence. As the Jews refused to hear the truth which Jesus spoke, so they showed that they were the children of the father of lies.

46. *Which of you convinceth me?* To convince, with us, means to satisfy a man's own mind of the truth of anything. But this is not its meaning here. It rather means to convict. Which of you can prove that I am guilty of sin? ¶ *Of sin.* The word *sin* here evidently means error, falsehood, or imposture. It stands opposed to truth. The argument of the Saviour is this: A doctrine might be rejected if it could be proved that he that delivered it was an impostor. But as you cannot prove this of me, you are bound to receive my words.

47. *He that is of God.* He that loves, fears, and honours God. ¶ *Heareth God's words.* Listens to, or attends to.

God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and<sup>1</sup> hast a devil?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 20; x. 20. Isa. xlix. 7; III. 2. Matt. x. 25.

the doctrines or commandments of God as a child who loves his parent will regard and obey his commandments. This is an evidence of true piety. A willingness to receive all that God teaches us, and to obey all his commandments, is an undoubted proof that we are his friends. As the Jews did not show a readiness to obey the commands of God, it proved that they were not of him, and to this was owing their rejection of the Lord Jesus.

48. *Say we not well?* Say we not truly? ¶ *Thou art a Samaritan.* This was a term of contempt and reproach. See Note, ch. iv. 9. It had the force of charging him with being a heretic, or a schismatic, because the Samaritans were so regarded. ¶ *And hast a devil.* See ch. vii. 20. This charge they brought against him because he had said that they were not of God, or were not the friends of God. This they regarded as the same as taking side with the Samaritans, for the question between the Jews and Samaritans was, which of them worshipped God aright. Ch. iv. 20. As Jesus affirmed that the Jews were not of God; and as he, contrary to all their views, had gone and preached to the Samaritans, ch. iv., they regarded it as a proof that he was disposed to take part with them. They also regarded it as evidence that he had a devil. The devil was an accuser, or calumniator, and as Jesus charged them with being opposed to God, they considered it as proof that he was influenced by such an evil spirit. ¶ *Devil.* In the original, *demon*. Not the prince or chief of the devils, but an evil spirit.

49. *I have not a devil.* To the first part of the charge, that he was a Samaritan, he did not reply. To the other part he replied by saying that he honoured his Father. He taught the doctrines that tended to exalt God. He taught that he was holy and true. He sought that men

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

50 And I<sup>2</sup> seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto

<sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 41; vii. 18.

should love him and obey him. All his teaching proved this. An evil spirit would not do this, and this was sufficient proof that he was not influenced by such a spirit.

50. *And I seek not mine own glory.* My own praise, or honour. In all his teaching this was true. He did not seek to exalt or to exultate himself. He was willing to be under reproach, and to be despised. He regarded little, therefore, their taunts and accusations, and even now, he says, he would not seek to vindicate himself. ¶ *There is one that seeketh and judgeth.* God will take care of my reputation. He seeks my welfare and honour, and I may commit my cause into his hands without attempting my own vindication. From ver. 46—50, we may learn: 1. That when men have no sound arguments, they attempt to overwhelm their adversaries by calling odious and reproachful names. Accusations of heresy and schism, and the use of reproachful terms, are commonly proof that men are not only under the influence of unchristian feeling, but that they have no sound reasons to support their cause. 2. It is right to vindicate ourselves from such charges, but it should not be done by rendering railing for railing. 2 Tim. ii. 25. 3. We should not regard it as necessarily dishonourable if we lie under reproach. If we have a good conscience, if we have examined for ourselves, if we are conscious that we are seeking the glory of God, we should be willing, as Jesus was, to bear reproach, believing that God will in due time sweep us, and bring forth our righteousness to the light, and our judgment as the new day. Psa. xxxvii. 6.

51. *If a man keep my saying.* If he believes on me, and obeys my commandments. ¶ *He shall never see death.* To see death, or to taste of death, is the same as to die. Matt. xvi. 28. *But*

, If a man keep my saying, shall never see death.

2 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast evil. Abraham is dead,<sup>1</sup> and prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall not taste<sup>2</sup> of death.

3 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? If the prophets are dead: whom dost thou thyself?

4 Jesus answered, If<sup>3</sup> I honour

John. i. 5, 6. Heb. xi. 13. <sup>2</sup> Heb. ii. 2. v. 31, 41; vii. 18. Prov. xxv. 27.

1. Luke ii. 26. The sense of this passage, he shall obtain eternal life, or he shall be raised up to that life where there shall be no death. See ch. iii. 36, v. 24, 9, 50, xi. 25, 26.

2. *Hast a devil.* Art deranged. Because he affirmed a thing which they supposed to be contrary to all experience, and therefore impossible.

3. *Whom makest thou thyself?* Or, dost thou pretend to be? Although the greatest of the prophets have died, thou, a Nazarene, a Samaritan, and a pretender that thou canst keep thyself from dying! It would have been scarcely possible to ask a question implying more contempt and scorn.

4. *If I honour myself.* If I commend or praise myself. If I had no other honour, and sought no other honour than that which proceeds from a desire to glorify myself. ¶ *My honour is nothing.* commendation or praise of myself should be of no value. See Note, ch. i.

5. *Your father Abraham.* The testimony of Abraham is adduced by Jesus because the Jews considered it to be a great honour to be his descendants. Ver.

As they regarded the sayings and actions of Abraham as peculiarly illustrious, worthy of their imitation, so they were bound in consistency to listen to what he had said of the Messiah. ¶ *Rejoice.* This word includes the notion of to be as well as rejoicing. It denotes an act when, impelled with strong desire for an object, we leap forward toward its attainment with joy. And it expresses,

myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father<sup>4</sup> that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:<sup>5</sup>

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him,<sup>6</sup> and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he<sup>7</sup> saw it, and was glad.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xviii. 1. <sup>5</sup> Isa. xlviii. 1, 2; lxvi. 5. Hos. i. 2. <sup>6</sup> Ch. i. 18; vi. 46; x. 15. Matt. xi. 27. <sup>7</sup> Heb. xi. 13.

1. The fact that this was an object that filled the heart of Abraham with joy. And, 2. That he earnestly desired to see it. We have no single word which expresses the meaning of the original. In Matt. v. 12, the word is rendered "be exceeding glad."

¶ *To see.* Rather, he earnestly and joyfully desired that he might see. *To see,* here, means to have a view or distinct conception of. It does not imply that Abraham expected that the Messiah would appear during his life; but that he might have a representation of, or a clear description and foresight of the times of the Messiah. ¶ *My day.* The day of the Messiah. The word *day*, here, is used to denote the times, the appearance, the advent, and the manner of life, of the Messiah. See ch. ix. 4. Matt. xi. 12. Luke xvii. 26. The day of judgment is also called the day of the Son of man, because it will be a remarkable time of his manifestation. Or perhaps in both these cases it is called his day, because he will act the most conspicuous part; his person and work will characterize the times; as we speak of the days of Noah, &c. because he was the most conspicuous person of the age. ¶ *He saw it.* See Heb. xi. 13. Though Abraham was not permitted to live to see the times of the Messiah, yet he was permitted to have a prophetic view of him, and also of the design of his coming: for, 1. God foretold his advent clearly to him. Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18. Compare Gal. iii. 16. 2. Abraham was permitted to have a view of the death of the Messiah as a sacrifice for sin, represented by the command to

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

offer Isaac. Gen. xxii. 1—13. Compare Heb. xi. 19. The death of the Messiah, as a sacrifice for the sins of men, was that which characterized his work, which distinguished his times and his advent; and this was represented to Abraham clearly by the command to offer his son. From this arose the proverb among the Jews, Gen. xxii. 14, "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen;" or, it shall be provided for; a proverb evidently referring to the offering of the Messiah on the mount for the sins of men. By this event Abraham was impressively told that a parent would not be required to offer in sacrifice his sons for the sins of his soul, a thing which has often been done by heathens; but that God would provide a victim, and in due time an offering would be made for the world. ¶ *Was glad.* Was glad in view of the promise, and that he was permitted so distinctly to see it represented. If the father of the faithful rejoiced so much to see this afar off, how should we rejoice that he has come; that we are not required to look into a distant futurity, but we know that he has appeared; that we may learn the manner of his coming, his doctrine, and the design of his death. Well might the eyes of a patriarch rejoice to be permitted to look in any manner on the sublime and glorious scene of the Son of God dying for the sins of men. And our chief honour and happiness is to contemplate the amazing scene of man's redemption, where the Saviour groaned and died to save a lost and ruined race.

57. *Fifty years old.* Jesus is supposed to have been at this time about thirty-three. It is remarkable that when he was so young they should have mentioned the number fifty. But they probably designed to prevent the possibility of a reply. Had they said forty, they might have apprehended a reply, or could not be so certain that they were correct. ¶ *Hast thou seen Abraham?* It is remarkable, also, that they perverted his words. His affirmation was not that he had seen Abraham, but that Abraham had seen his day. The design of Jesus was to show that he was greater than

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I <sup>1</sup> am

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 1, 2. Exod. iii. 14. Isa. xlii. 13. Col. i. 17. Rev. i. 8.

Abraham. Ver. 53. To do this, he says that Abraham, great as he was, earnestly desired to see his time, thus acknowledging his own inferiority to the Messiah. The Jews perverted this, and affirmed that it was impossible that he and Abraham should have seen each other.

58. *Verily, verily.* This is an expression used only in John, expressing strong affirmation, and particularly the great importance of what was about to be affirmed. Note, ch. iii. 5. ¶ *Before Abraham was.* Before Abraham lived. ¶ *I am.* The expression *I am*, though in the present tense, is clearly designed to express a past time. Thus in ch. i. 9, Psa. xc. 2. Applied to God, it denotes continued existence, without respect to time, so far as he is concerned. *We* mean time, we divide it into the past, the present, and the future. The expression, applied to God, denotes that *he* does not measure his existence in this manner, but that the word by which we express the present, denotes his continued and unchanging existence. Hence he assumes it as his name, "I AM;" and "I AM THAT I AM." Exod. iii. 14. Compare Isa. xlv. 6, xlvii. 8. There is a remarkable similarity between the expression employed by Jesus in this place, and that used in Exodus to denote the name of God. The manner in which Jesus used it would strikingly suggest the application of the same language to God. The question here was about the pre-existence of Jesus. The objection of the Jews was, that he was not fifty years old, and could not, therefore, have seen Abraham. Jesus replied to that, that he existed before Abraham. As in his human nature he was not yet fifty years old, and could not as a man, have existed before Abraham, this declaration must be referred to another nature; and the passage proves that while he was a man he was also endowed with another nature existing before Abraham, and to which he applied the term, familiar to the Jews as expressive of the existence of God, I AM; and this declaration corresponds to the affirmation of John, ch. i. 1, that he was in the beginning with God, and was God.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them and so passed by.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER IX.

*The blind man restored, 1—7. Disputes respecting the miracle, 8—34. Whom Christ enlightens, 35—41.*

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 13; x. 39, 40; xi. 54. Luke iv. 30.

This affirmation of Jesus is one of the proofs on which John relies to prove that he was the Messiah, ch. xx. 31, to establish which was the design of writing this book.

59. *Then took they up stones.* It seems they understood him as blaspheming, and proceeded, even without form of trial, to stone him as such, because this was the punishment prescribed in the law for blasphemy. Lev. xxiv. 16. See ch. x. 31. The fact that the Jews understood him in this sense is strong proof that his words naturally conveyed the idea that he was divine. This was in the temple. Herod the Great had not yet completed its repairs, and Dr. Lightfoot has remarked that stones would be lying around the temple in repairing it, which the people could easily use in their indignation. ¶ *Jesus hid himself.* See Luke iv. 30. That is, he either by a miracle rendered himself invisible, or he so mixed with the multitude that he was concealed from them, and escaped. Which is the meaning cannot be determined.

## CHAPTER IX.

1. *As Jesus passed by.* As he was leaving the temple. Ch. viii. 59. This man was in the way in which Jesus was going to escape from the Jews.

2. *Master, who did sin?* &c. It was a universal opinion among the Jews that calamities of all kinds were the effects of sin. See Note, Luke xiii. 1—4. The case, however, of this man, was that of one that was blind from his birth, and it was a question which the disciples could not determine whether it was his fault or that of his parents. Many of the Jews, as it appears from their writings (see Lightfoot), believed in the doctrine of the transmigration of souls; or that the soul

AND as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered,<sup>2</sup> Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents:

<sup>2</sup> Job. 1. 8—12; ii. 3—6. Eccl. ix. 1, 2.

of a man, in consequence of sin, might be compelled to pass into other bodies, and be punished there. They also believed that an infant might sin before it was born (see Lightfoot), and that consequently this blindness might come upon the child as a consequence of that. It was also a doctrine with many that the crime of the parent might be the cause of deformity in the child, particularly the violation of the command in Lev. xx. 18.

3. *Neither hath this man sinned, &c.* That is, his blindness is not the effect of his sin, or that of his parents. Jesus did not, evidently, mean to affirm that he, or his parents, were without any sin, but that this blindness was not the effect of sin. This answer is to be interpreted by the nature of the question submitted to him. The sense is, "his blindness is not to be traced to any fault of his or of his parents." ¶ *But that the works of God.* This thing has happened that it might appear how great and wonderful are the works of God. By the *works of God*, here, is evidently intended the miraculous power which God would put forth to heal the man, or rather, perhaps, the whole that happened to this man in the course of divine providence; first his blindness, as an act of his providence, and then his healing him, as an act of his mercy and his power. It has all happened, not by the fault of his parents or of himself, but by the wise arrangement of God, that it might be seen in what way calamities come, and in what way God meets and relieves them. And from this we may learn, 1. To pity, and not to despise and blame those who are afflicted with any natural deformity or calamity. While the Jews regarded it as the effect of sin, they looked upon it without compassion. Jesus tells us that it is not the fault of man, but proceeds



## *The blind man healed.*

JOHN.

A.D. 32.

but that <sup>1</sup> the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 4.

from the wise arrangement of God. 2. All suffering in the world is not directly the effect of sin. In this case it is expressly so declared. And there may be many modes of suffering that cannot be traced to any particular transgression. We should be cautious, therefore, in affirming that there can be no calamity in the universe but by transgression. 3. We see the wise and wonderful arrangement of divine Providence. It is a part of God's great plan to adapt his mercies to the woes of men; and often, calamity, want, poverty, and sickness, are permitted, that he may show the provisions of his mercy; that he may teach us to prize his blessings; and that deep-felt gratitude for deliverance may bind us to him. 4. Those who are afflicted with blindness, deafness, or any deformity, should be submissive to God. It is his appointment, and is right and best. God does no wrong, and when all his works are seen, the universe will feel and know that he is just.

4. *The works of him, &c.* The works of beneficence and mercy which God has commissioned me to do, and which are expressive of his goodness and power. This was on the sabbath day, ver. 14; and though Jesus had endangered his life, ch. v. 1—16, by working a similar miracle on the sabbath, yet he knew that this was the will of God that he should do good, and that he would take care of his life. ¶ *While it is day.* The day is the proper time for work. Night is not. This is the general, the universal sentiment. While the day lasts it is proper to labour. The term *day*, here, refers to the life of Jesus, and to the opportunity thus afforded of working miracles. His life was drawing to a close. It was probably but about six months after this when he was put to death. The meaning is: My life is near its close. While it continues I must employ it in doing the works which God has appointed. ¶ *The night cometh.* Night, here, represents death.

5 As long as I am in the world, I <sup>2</sup> am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, he <sup>3</sup> spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he <sup>4</sup> anointed

<sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 9. <sup>3</sup> viii. 12; xii. 35, 46. <sup>4</sup> Mark vii. 33; viii. 23. Rev. iii. 18. <sup>5</sup> Or, *spread the clay upon the eyes of the blind man.*

It was drawing near, and he must, therefore, do what he had to do soon. It is not improbable, also, that this took place near the close of the sabbath, as the sun was declining, and the shades of evening about to appear. This supposition will give increased beauty to the language which follows. ¶ *No man can work.* It is literally true that day is the appropriate time for toil, and that the night of death is a time when nothing can be done. Eccl. ix. 10. From this we may learn, 1. That it is our duty to employ all our time in doing the will of God. 2. That we should seek for opportunities of doing good, and suffer none to pass without improving it. We go but once through the world, and we cannot return to correct errors, and recall neglected opportunities of doing our duty. 3. We should be especially diligent in doing our Lord's work, from the fact that the night of death is coming. This applies to the aged, for they must soon die; and to the young, for they may soon be called away from this world to eternity.

5. *As long as I am, &c.* As the setting sun is the natural light of the world, even while it sinks away to the west, so am I, although my days are drawing to a close, the light of the spiritual world. What a sublime description is this! Jesus occupied the same place, filled the same measure, shed his beams as far, in the moral world, as the sun does on natural objects! And as all is dark when that sun sinks to the west; so, when he withdraws from the souls of men all is midnight and gloom! When we look on the sun in the firmament, or in the west, let us remember that such is the great Sun of righteousness in regard to our souls; that his shining is as necessary, and his beams as mild and lovely on the soul, as is the shining of the natural sun to illuminate the material creation. See Note, ch. i. 4.

6. *And made clay, &c.* Two reasons

the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam,<sup>1</sup> (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He<sup>2</sup> went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

8 ¶ The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

<sup>1</sup> Neh. iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Kin. v. 14.

may be assigned for making this clay, and anointing the eyes with it. One is, that the Jews regarded spittle as medicinal to the eyes when diseased, and that they forbade the use of medicines on the sabbath. They regarded the sabbath so strictly that they considered the preparation and use of medicines as contrary to the law. Especially it was particularly forbidden among them to use spittle on that day to heal diseased eyes. See instances in Lightfoot. Jesus, therefore, by making this spittle, showed them that their manner of keeping the day was superstitious, and that he dared to do a thing which they esteemed unlawful. He showed that their interpretation of the law of the sabbath was contrary to the intention of God, and that his disciples were not bound by their notions of the sacredness of that day. Another reason may have been, that it was common for prophets to use some symbolical or expressive action in working miracles. Thus Elisha commanded his staff to be laid on the face of the child that he was about restore to life. 2 Kin. iv. 29. Compare Notes on Isa. viii. 18. In such instances the prophet showed that the miracle was wrought by power communicated through him. So in this case, Jesus, by this act, showed to the blind man that the power of healing came from him who anointed his eyes. He could not see him, and the act of anointing convinced him of what might have been known without such an act, could he have seen him, that Jesus had power to give sight to the blind.

7. Wash in the pool. In the fountain.

10 Therefore said they unto him How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay,<sup>3</sup> and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he?<sup>4</sup> He said, I know not.

13 ¶ They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 6, 7, 27. Jer. xxxvi. 17. <sup>4</sup> Ch. v. 11-13; vii. 11.

¶ Of Siloam. See Note, Luke xiii. 4. ¶ By interpretation, Sent. From the Hebrew verb to send, perhaps because it was regarded as a blessing sent or given by God. Why Jesus sent him to wash at this pool is not known. It is clear that the waters had no efficacy themselves to open the eyes; but it is probable that he directed him to go there, to test his obedience, and to see whether he was disposed to obey him in a case where he could not see the reason of it. An instance somewhat similar occurs in the case of Naaman the Syrian leper. 2 Kin. v. 10. The proud Syrian despised the direction; the humble blind man obeyed and was healed. This case shows us that we should obey the commands of God, however unmeaning or mysterious they may appear. God has always a reason for all that he directs us to do; and our faith and willingness to obey him are often tried when we can see little of the reason of his requirements. The name Siloam is not from the Hebrew word Shiloh, used in Gen. xlix. 10, as a name of the Messiah, but from another word which signifies to send.

8. The neighbours, &c. This man seems to have been one who attracted considerable attention. The number of persons totally blind in any community is very small, and it is possible that this was the only blind beggar in Jerusalem. The case was one, therefore, likely to attract attention, and one where there could be no imposture, as he was generally known.

13. To the Pharisees. To the members of the sanhedrim. They did this,

14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.<sup>1</sup>

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 9, 16; vii. 21—23. Matt. xii. 1—13. Mark ii. 23—28; iii. 1—6.

doubtless, to accuse Jesus of having violated the sabbath; and not, as they ought to have done, to examine into the evidence that he was from God.

15. *The Pharisees asked him how, &c.* The proper question to have been asked in that case was, whether he had in fact wrought the miracle, and not in what way. The question also about a sinner's conversion is whether in fact it has been wrought; and not about the mode or manner in which it is effected. Yet it is remarkable that no small part of the disputes and inquiries among men are about the mode in which the Spirit renews the heart, and not about the evidence that the heart is renewed.

16. *Is not of God.* Is not sent by God; or cannot be a friend of God. ¶ *Because he keepeth not the sabbath day.* They assumed that their views of the sabbath were correct, and by those views they judged others. It did not occur to them to inquire whether the interpretation which they put on the law might not be erroneous. Men often assume their own interpretations of the scriptures to be infallible, and then judge and condemn all others by those interpretations. ¶ *A sinner.* A deceiver, an impostor. They reasoned conclusively that God would not give the power of working such miracles to an impostor. The miracles were such as could not be denied; nor did even the enemies of Jesus attempt to deny them, or even to explain them away. They were open, public, frequent. And this shows that they could not deny their reality. Had it been possible they would have done so. But the reality and power of those miracles had already made a party in favour of Jesus, even in the sanhedrim, ch. vii. 50; xii. 42; and those opposed to them could not deny the reality. It may be added that the

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How<sup>2</sup> can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And<sup>3</sup> there was a division among them.

17 They say unto the blind man

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 31; ch. iii. 2. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vii. 12, 43; 19. Luke xiii. 51—53. Acts xiv. 4.

early opponents of Christianity never denied the reality of the miracles performed by the Saviour and his apostles. Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, as acute foes of the gospel as perhaps have ever lived, never called this in question. They attempted to show that it was by some evil influence, or to account for the miracles in some other way than by admitting the divine origin of the christian religion; but about the facts they had no question. Were they not as well qualified to judge about those facts as men now? They lived near the time, had every opportunity to examine the evidence, were skilful and talented disputants, and if they could have denied the reality of the miracles they would have done so. It is scarcely possible to conceive of more conclusive proof that those miracles were really performed, and if so, then the Lord Jesus was sent by God. ¶ *A division.* Greek, a schism. A separation into two parties.

17. *What sayest thou of him, &c.* The translation here expresses the sense obscurely. The meaning is, "What sayest thou of him for giving thee sight?" (Campbell.) Or, "What opinion of him hath this work of power and mercy to thee, wrought in thee?" (Hammond.) ¶ *He is a prophet.* That is, I think that the power to work such a miracle proves that he is sent from God. And though this has been done on the sabbath, yet it proves that he must have been sent by God, for such a power could never have proceeded from man, or a sinner. We see here, 1. A noble confession made by the man who was healed, in the face of the rulers of the people, and when he doubtless knew that they were opposed to Jesus. We should never be ashamed, before any class of men, to acknowledge the favours we have received from Christ.

again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.<sup>1</sup>

18 But the Jews did not believe <sup>a</sup> concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iv. 19; vi. 14. Luke xxiv. 19. Acts ii. 22; iii. 22-26. <sup>a</sup> Isa. xxvi. 11; illi. 1. Luke xvi. 31.

and to express our belief of his person, his power, and his doctrine. 2. The works of Jesus were such as to prove that he came from God, however much he may have appeared to oppose the previous notions of men, the interpretations of the law by the Pharisees, or the deductions of reason. Men should yield their own views of religion to the teachings of God; and believe that he that could open the eyes of the blind, and raise the dead, was fitted to declare his will.

18, 19. *Is this your son, &c.* The Pharisees proposed three questions to the parents, by which they hoped to convict the man of falsehood. 1. Whether he was their son? 2. Whether they would affirm that he was born blind? And, 3. Whether they knew by what means he now saw! They evidently intended to intimidate the parents, so that they might give an answer to one of these questions that would convict the man of deception. We see here the art to which men will resort, rather than admit the truth. Had they been half as much disposed to believe on Jesus as they were to disbelieve, there would have been no difficulty in the case. And so with all men; were they as much inclined to embrace the truth, as they are to reject it, there would soon be an end of cavils.

20—22. *His parents answered, &c.* To the first two questions they answered without hesitation. They knew that he was their son, and that he was born

our son, and that he was born blind:

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These words spake his parents, because they <sup>b</sup> feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he <sup>c</sup> should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. vii. 13; xii. 42. Prov. xxix. 25. <sup>c</sup> Ver. 34; ch. xvi. 2.

blind. To the third question they could not positively answer, as they had not witnessed the means of the cure, and were afraid to express their belief. It appears that they had themselves no doubt, but they were not eye-witnesses, and could not be therefore legal evidence.

¶ *He is of age.* He is of sufficient age to give testimony. Among the Jews this age was fixed at thirteen years. ¶ *Did confess that he was Christ.* Did acknowledge that he was the Messiah. They had prejudged the case, and determined to put down all free inquiry, and not to be convinced by any means. ¶ *Put out of the synagogue.* This miracle took place in the temple, or near the temple; the reference in these words therefore is not to any immediate and violent putting forth from that place, but to excommunication from the synagogue. Among the Jews there were two grades of excommunication; the one for lighter offences, of which they mentioned twenty-four causes; the other for greater offences. The first excluded a man for thirty days from the privilege of entering a synagogue, and from coming nearer to his wife or friends than four cubits. The other was a solemn exclusion for ever from the worship of the synagogue, attended with awful maledictions and curses, and an exclusion from all intercourse with the people. This was called the curse, and so thoroughly excluded the person from all communion whatever with his countrymen, that they

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God<sup>1</sup> the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, where-as I was blind, now I see.

<sup>1</sup> Josh. vii. 19. Psa. l. 14, 15.

were not allowed to sell to him any thing, even the necessaries of life. (Buxtorf.) It is probable that this latter punishment was what they intended to inflict if any one should confess that Jesus was the Messiah; and it was the fear of this terrible punishment that deterred the parents of the blind man from expressing their opinion.

24. *Give God the praise.* This expression seems to be a form of administering an oath. It is used in Josh. vii. 19, when Achan was put on his oath, and entreated to confess his guilt. Joshua said, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, (in the Greek of the Septuagint, the very expression used in John, 'Give God the praise,') and make confession unto him." It is equivalent to an adjuration in the presence of God to acknowledge the truth; as the truth would be giving God praise, confessing the case before him, and trusting to his mercy. Compare 1 Sam. vi. 5. The meaning here is not "give God praise for healing you," for they were not willing to admit that he had been cured, ver. 18. but confess that there is imposture in this case, that you have declared to us a falsehood, that you have endeavoured to impose on us; and by thus confessing your sin give praise and honour to God, who condemns all imposture and falsehood, and whom you will thus acknowledge to be right in your condemnation. To induce him to do this, they added, that they knew, or were satisfied, that Jesus was a sinner. As they considered that point settled, they urged him to confess that he had attempted to impose on them. ¶ *We know.* We have settled that. He has broken the sabbath, and that leaves no doubt. ¶ *A sinner.* A violator of the law respecting the sabbath, and an impostor. See ver. 16.

25. *Whether he be a sinner or no, I*

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

*know not.* The man had just said that he believed Jesus to be a prophet. Ver. 17. By his saying that he did not know whether he was a sinner, may be meant that though he might be a prophet, yet that he might not be perfect; or that it did not become him, being an obscure and unlearned man, to attempt to determine that question. What follows shows that he did not believe that he was a sinner; and these words were probably spoken in irony to deride the Pharisees. They were perverse and full of cavils; and were determined not to believe. The man reminded that the question was not whether Jesus was a sinner; that though that might be, yet it did not settle the other question about opening his eyes which was the chief point of the inquiry. ¶ *One thing I know, &c.* About this he could have no doubt. He disregarded, therefore their cavils. We may observe here, 1. This declaration may be made by every converted sinner. He may not be able to meet the cavils of others. He may not be able to tell how he was converted. It is enough if he can say, "I was a sinner, but now love God; I was in darkness, but have now been brought to the light of truth." 2. We should not be ashamed of the fact that we are made to see by the Son of God. No cavil or derision of men should deter us from such an avowal. 3. Sinners are perpetually shirking the real point of inquiry. They do not inquire into the facts. They assume that a certain thing cannot be true, and then argue as if that was a conceded point. The proper way in religion is to inquire into the facts, and then account for them as we can.

26. *How opened he thine eyes?* The reason why they asked this so often was doubtless to attempt to draw him into contradiction; either to intimidate him, or throw him off his guard, so that he

28 Then they reviled<sup>1</sup> him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

29 We know<sup>2</sup> that God spake unto Moses: *as for this fellow*, we<sup>3</sup> know not from whence he is.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why<sup>4</sup> herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 47—52. Isa. li. 7. Matt. v. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 23. <sup>2</sup> Psa. cxli. 7. Heb. iii. 5. <sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 14. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 10.

might be detected in denying what he had before affirmed. But God gave to this poor man grace and strength to make a bold confession of the truth, and completely to confound his proud and subtle examiners.

28. *Thou art his disciple.* This they cast at him as reproach. His defence of Jesus they regarded as proof that he was his follower, and this they now attempted to show was inconsistent with being a friend of Moses and his law. Moses had given the law respecting the sabbath; Jesus had healed a man on that day, which was contrary, in their view, to the law of Moses. They therefore held Jesus to be a violator and contemner of the law of Moses. His followers in their esteem were no better. ¶ *We are Moses' disciples.* We acknowledge the authority of the law of Moses, which Jesus has broken by healing on the sabbath.

29. *We know, &c.* We know that God commanded Moses to deliver the law. In that they were correct. But they assumed their interpretation of the law to be infallible, and hence condemned Jesus. ¶ *As for this fellow.* The word *fellow* is not in the original. It is simply, *this*. The word *fellow* implies contempt, which it cannot be proved they intended to express. ¶ *Whence he is.* We know not his origin, his family, or his home. The contrast with the preceding member of the sentence shows that they intended to express their belief that he was not from God. They knew not whether he was mad, whether he was instigated by the devil, or whether he spoke of himself. See ch. vii. 27; viii. 48—52.

30. *A marvellous thing.* This is wonderful and amazing. ¶ *Know not from whence he is.* That you cannot perceive

from whence he is, and yet he hath opened<sup>5</sup> mine eyes.

31 Now we know that God<sup>6</sup> heareth not sinners: but if<sup>7</sup> any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it

<sup>5</sup> Psa. cxix. 18. Isa. xxix. 18, 19; xxxv. 5. 2 Cor. iv. 6. <sup>6</sup> Job xxvii. 9. Psa. lxxvi. 18. Prov. xxviii. 9. Isa. i. 15. Jer. xi. 11. Ezek. viii. 18. Mic. iii. 4. Zech. vii. 13. <sup>7</sup> Psa. xxxiv. 15. Prov. xv. 29.

that he who has wrought such a miracle must be from God.

31. *Now we know.* That is, it is an admitted or conceded point. No one calls it into question. ¶ *God heareth not.* When a miracle was performed, it was customary to invoke the aid of God. Jesus often did this himself, and it was by his power only that prophets and apostles could perform miracles. The word *heareth* in this place is to be understood as referring to such cases. God will not hear, i. e. answer. ¶ *Sinners.* Impostors. False prophets, and pretenders to divine revelation. See ver. 24. The meaning of this verse is therefore, "It is well understood, that God will not give miraculous aid to impostors and false prophets." We may remark here, 1. That the passage has no reference to the prayers which sinners make for salvation. 2. If it had, it would not be of course true. It was the mere opinion of this man, in accordance with the common sentiment of the Jews, and there is no evidence that he was inspired. 3. The only prayers which God will not hear, are those which are offered in mockery, or when the man loves his sins, and is unwilling to give them up. Such prayers God will not hear. Job xxvii. 9. Psa. lxvi. 18. Isa. i. 15. Jer. xi. 11. Ezek. viii. 18. Mic. iii. 4. Zech. vii. 13. ¶ *A worshipper.* A sincere worshipper; one who fears, loves, and adores him. ¶ *Doth his will.* Obeys his commandments. This is infallibly true. The scripture abounds with promises to such that God will hear their prayer. See Psa. xxxiv. 15.

32. *Since the world began.* Neither Moses nor any of the prophets had ever wrought such a miracle. No instance is recorded in

not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou<sup>1</sup> wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they<sup>2</sup> cast him<sup>3</sup> out.

35 Jesus heard that they had

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 2.    <sup>2</sup> Or, excommunicated him.    <sup>3</sup> Isa. xvi. 5.

the Old Testament. As this was a miracle which had never been performed, the man argued justly that he who had opened his eyes must be from God. As Jesus did it not by surgical operations, but by clay, it showed that he had power of working miracles by any means. It may be also remarked that the restoration of sight to the blind by surgical operations was never performed until the year 1728. Dr. Cheselden, an English surgeon, was the first who attempted it successfully, who was enabled to remove a cataract from the eye of a young man, and to restore sight. This fact shows the difficulty of the operation, when the most skilful natural means are employed, and the greatness of the miracle performed by the Saviour.

33. *Could do nothing.* Could do no such work as this. This reasoning was conclusive. The fact that Jesus could perform miracles like this was full proof that he was commissioned by God; proof that never has been and never can be refuted. One such miracle proves that he was from God. But Jesus gave many similar proofs, and thus put his divine mission beyond the possibility of doubt.

34. *Wast born in sins.* That is, thou wast born in a state of blindness, a state which proved that either thou or thy parents had sinned, and that this was the punishment for it. See ver. 2. Thou wast cursed by God with blindness for crime, and yet thou dost set up for a religious teacher! When men have no arguments, they attempt to supply the place of them by reviling. When they are pressed by argument, they reproach their adversaries with crime, and especially with being blind, perverse, heretical, disposed to speculation, and regardless of the

cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe<sup>4</sup> on the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and<sup>5</sup> it is he that talketh with thee.

<sup>4</sup> 1 John v. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. iv. 26.

authority of God. And especially do they consider it great presumption that one of an inferior age or rank, should presume to advance an argument in opposition to prevailing opinions. ¶ *They cast him out.* Out of the synagogue. They excommunicated him. See Note on ver. 22.

35. *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* Hitherto he had understood little of the true character of Jesus. He believed that he had power to heal him, and he inferred that he must be a prophet, ver. 17. He believed according to the light he had; and he now showed that he was prepared to believe all that Jesus said. This is the nature of true faith. It believes all that God has made known; and it is prepared to receive all that he will teach. The phrase *Son of God* here is equivalent to the *Messiah*. Note, Matt. viii. 29.

36. *Who is he?* It is probable that the man did not know that he who now addressed him was the same who had healed him. He had not yet seen him, ver. 7, but was prepared to acknowledge him when he did see him. He inquired, therefore, who the person was, or wished that he might be pointed out to him that he might see him. This passage shows that he was disposed to believe, and had a strong desire to see and hear the Son of God. ¶ *Lord.* This word here, as in many other instances in the New Testament, means Sir. It is clear that the man did not know that it was the Lord Jesus that addressed him, and he therefore replied to him in the common language of respect, and asked him to point out to him the Son of God. The word translated Lord here, is rendered "Sir" in ch. iv. 11; xii. 21; xx. 15. Matt.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe.  
 1 And he worshipped him.

39 ¶ And Jesus said, For <sup>2</sup> judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not <sup>3</sup> might see; and that they which see might be made blind. <sup>4</sup>

40 And some of the Pharisees

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiv. 33. <sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 22, 27; xii. 47.  
<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 9. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 19. Matt. xiii. 13.

xxvii. 63. Acts xvi. 30. It should have been also here, and in many other places.

38. *I believe.* This was the overflowing expression of gratitude and faith. ¶ *And he worshipped him.* He did homage to him as the Messiah, and as his gracious benefactor. See Note, Matt. ii. 2. This shows, 1. That it is right and natural to express thanks and praise for mercies. 2. All blessings should lead us to pour out our gratitude to Jesus, for it is from him that we receive them. 3. Especially is this true when the mind has been enlightened; when our spiritual eyes have been opened, and we are permitted to see the glories of the heavenly world. 4. It is right to pay homage or worship to Jesus. He forbade it not. He received it on earth; and for all mercies of providence and redemption, we should pay to him the tribute of humble and grateful hearts. The Syriac renders the phrase, "he worshipped him," thus, "and casting himself down he adored him." The Persic, "and he bowed down and adored Christ." The Arabic, "and he adored him." The Vulgate, "and falling down he adored him."

39. *For judgment.* The word *judgment* here has been, by some, understood in the sense of condemnation. The effect of my coming is to condemn the world. But this meaning does not agree with those places where Jesus says he came not to condemn the world. Ch. iii. 17; v. 45; xii. 47. To *judge* is to express an opinion in a judicial manner; and also to express any sentiment about any person or thing. Ch. v. 30; vii. 24. Luke vii. 43. The meaning of the word here may be thus expressed: I came to declare the condition of men, to show them their duty and danger. My coming will have this effect, that some will be reformed and saved, and some more deeply condemned. ¶ *That they, &c.* This does not say that

which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we <sup>5</sup> blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, If <sup>6</sup> ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore <sup>7</sup> your sin remaineth.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. ii. 19. Rev. iii. 17. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xv. 22, 24. <sup>7</sup> Isa. v. 21. Luke xviii. 14. 1 John i. 8—10.

this was the design of his coming, but that such would be the effect or result. He came to declare the truth, and the effect would be, &c. Similar instances of expression frequently occur. Compare Matt. x. 34; xi. 25. "I came not to send peace but a sword," i. e. such will be the effect of my coming. ¶ *That they which see not.* Jesus took this illustration, as he commonly did, from the case before him. But it is evident that he meant it to be taken in a spiritual sense. He refers to those who are blind and ignorant by sin, whose minds have been darkened, but who are desirous of seeing. ¶ *Might see.* Might discern the path of truth, of duty, and of salvation. Ch. x. 9. ¶ *They which see.* They who suppose they see; who are proud, self-confident, and despisers of the truth. Such were evidently the Pharisees. ¶ *Might be made blind.* Such would be the effect of his preaching. It would exasperate them; and their pride and opposition to him would confirm them more and more in their erroneous views. This is always the effect of truth. Where it does not soften, it hardens the heart; where it does not convert, it sinks into deeper blindness and condemnation.

41. *If ye were blind.* If you were really blind, had had no opportunities of learning the truth; if you were truly ignorant, and were willing to confess it, and to come to me for instruction. ¶ *No sin.* You would not be guilty. Sin is measured by the capacities or ability of men, and by their opportunities of knowing the truth. If men had no ability to do the will of God, they would not be to blame. If they have all proper ability, and no disposition, God holds them to be guilty. This passage teaches conclusively: 1. That men are not condemned for what they cannot do. 2. That the reason why they



## CHAPTER X.

*The parable of the shepherd, 1—6. Christ the door and the good shepherd, 7—18. Disputes about Christ, 19—21. Jesus declares who he was, 22—30. His life attempted, 31—36. His escape, 39—42.*

**V**ERILY, verily, I say unto you, <sup>1</sup> He that entereth not

<sup>1</sup> Rom. x. 15. Heb. v. 4.

are condemned in, that they are not disposed to receive the truth. 3. That pride and self-confidence are the sources of condemnation. 4. That if men are condemned, they, and not God, will be to blame. ¶ *We see.* We have knowledge of the law of God. This they had pretended when they professed to understand the law respecting the sabbath better than Jesus, and condemned him for healing on that day. ¶ *Your sin remaineth.* You are guilty, and your sin is unpardoned. Men's sins will always be unpardoned while they are proud, and self-sufficient, and confident of their own wisdom. If they will come with humble hearts, and confess their ignorance, God will forgive, enlighten, and guide them in the path to heaven.

## CHAPTER X.

1. *Verily, verily.* See Note, ch. iii. 3. ¶ *I say unto you.* Some have supposed that what follows here was delivered on some other occasion than the one mentioned in the last chapter. But the expression, *verily, verily*, is one which is not used at the commencement of a discourse, and the discourse itself seems to be a continuation of what was said before. The Pharisees professed to be the guides or shepherds of the people. Jesus, in the close of the last chapter, had charged them with being blind, and of course, with being unqualified to lead the people. He proceeds here to state the character of a true shepherd, to show what was a hireling, and to declare that he was the true shepherd and guide of his people. This is called, ver. 6, a parable, and it is an eminently beautiful illustration of the office of the Messiah, drawn from an employment well known in Judea. The Messiah was predicted under the image of a shepherd. Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24. Zech. xiii. 7. Hence at the close of the discourse they asked him whether he were the Messiah. Ver. 24. ¶ *Into the*

by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the <sup>2</sup> door is the shepherd of the sheep.

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 7, 8. Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. iii. 2-7. Tit. i. 5-8.

*sheepfold.* The sheepfold was an enclosure made in fields where the sheep were collected by night to defend them from robbers, wolves, &c. It was not commonly covered, as the seasons in Judea were mild. By the figure here we are to understand, the Jewish people, or the church of God, which is often likened to a flock. Jer. xxiii. 1—4. Ezek. xxxiv. 1—19. Zech. xiii. By the door here is meant the Lord Jesus Christ. Ver. 7, 9. He is "the way, the truth, and the life." Ch. xiv. 6. And as the only proper way of entering the fold was by the door, so the only way of entering the church of God, is by the Lord Jesus, that is by believing on him, and obeying his commandments. The particular application of this place, however, is to religious teachers, who cannot enter properly on the duties of teaching and guarding the flock, except by the Lord Jesus, that is, in the way which he has appointed. The Pharisees claimed to be pastors, but they were not under his appointment. They entered some other way. The true pastors of the church are those who enter by the influences of the Spirit of Jesus, and in the manner which he has appointed. ¶ *Some other way.* Either at a window, or over the wall. ¶ *A thief.* One who silently and secretly takes away the property of another. ¶ *A robber.* One who does it by violence or bloodshed. Jesus here designates those pastors or ministers of religion who are influenced not by love to him, but who seek the office from ambition, or the love of power, or wealth, or ease; who come not to promote the welfare of the church, but to promote their own interests or passions. Alas! in all churches there have been many, many, who for no better ends have sought the pastoral office. To all such Jesus gives the names of thieves and robbers.

2. *He that entereth by the door.* This was the way in which a shepherd had

3 To him <sup>1</sup> the porter openeth ; and the sheep hear his voice : and he calleth <sup>2</sup> his own sheep by name, and leadeth <sup>3</sup> them out

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lili. 10—12. 1 Cor. xvi. 9. Col. iv. 3. 1 Pet. i. 12. Rev. iii. 20. <sup>2</sup> Ezek. xxxiv. 11. Rom. viii. 30. <sup>3</sup> Isa. xl. 11.

access to his flock. In ver. 7, Jesus says he is the door. In this place he refers to those who, by him, that is, in accordance with his spirit and law, became ministers of religion. ¶ *Is the shepherd of the sheep.* Christ does not here refer to himself, for he is the way or door by which others enter. But he refers to all the ministers of the gospel who have access to the church by him. In the original the article *the* is wanting before the word shepherd ; *he that entereth is a shepherd.* By his entering in this manner he shows that he is a shepherd, one who cares for his flock, and does not come to kill and destroy.

3. *To him the porter openeth.* The porter is the door-keeper. It seems that the more wealthy Jews who owned flocks, employed some person to take charge of the flock. At first all shepherds attended their flocks personally by day and by night ; and this continued to be commonly the practice, but not always. ¶ *The sheep hear his voice.* The voice of the shepherd. A flock will readily discern the well-known voice of one who is accustomed to tend them. The meaning is, that the people of God will be found disposed to listen to the instructions of those who are appointed by Christ, who preach his pure doctrine, and who show a real love for the church of God. There is scarcely any better test of fidelity in the pastoral office than the approbation of the humble and obscure people of God, when they discern in the preacher the very manner and spirit of the doctrines of the bible. ¶ *He calleth his own sheep by name.* It was customary, and is so still, we are told by travellers, for shepherds to give particular names to their sheep, by which they soon learned to regard the voice of the shepherd. By this the Saviour indicates doubtless that it is the duty of a minister of religion to seek an intimate and personal acquaintance with the people of his charge ; to feel an interest in them as individuals, and not

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him : for they know his voice.<sup>4</sup>

5 And a stranger will they not

<sup>4</sup> Cant. ii. 8 ; v. 2.

merely to address them together ; to learn their private wants, to meet them in their individual trials, and to administer to them personally the consolations of the gospel. ¶ *Leadeth them out.* He leads them from the fold to pasture, or to water. Perhaps the care of a faithful pastor to provide suitable instruction for the people of his charge, and to feed them with the bread of life, is here intended. See a beautiful and touching description of the great Shepherd in Psa. xxiii.

4. *He putteth forth.* Or leads them out of the fold. ¶ *He goeth before them.* He leads them, and guides them, and does not leave them. A shepherd spent his time with his flocks. He went before them to seek the best pastures, and watering places, and to defend them from danger. In this is beautifully represented the tender care of him who watches for souls as one that must give account.

5. *A stranger, &c.* This was literally true of a flock. Accustomed to the voice and presence of a kind shepherd, they would not regard the command of a stranger. It is also true spiritually. Jesus by this indicates that the true people of God will not follow false teachers, those who are proud, haughty, and self-seeking, as were the Pharisees. Many may follow such, but humble and devoted Christians seek those who have the mild and self-denying spirit of their Master and great Shepherd. It is also true in reference to those who are pastors in the churches. They have an influence which no stranger or wandering minister, can have. A church learns to put confidence in a pastor ; he knows their wants, sees their danger, and can adapt his instructions to them. A stranger, however eloquent or pious, or learned, can have few of these advantages ; and it is more absurd to commit the churches to the care of wandering strangers, of those who have no permanent relation to the church, than it would be for a flock to be committed to a foreigner who knew nothing of it, and who had not

follow, but will flee <sup>1</sup> from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but <sup>2</sup> they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I <sup>3</sup> am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 5. Rev. ii. 2. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vi. 52, 60; vii. 36; viii. 27, 43. <sup>3</sup> Ver. i. 9. Ch. xiv. 6. Eph. ii. 18. Heb. x. 19—22.

particular interest in it. The pastoral office is one of the wisest institutions of Heaven.

6. *This parable.* See Note on Matt. xiii. 3. ¶ *They understood not, &c.* They did not understand the meaning or design of the illustration.

7. *I am the door.* I am the way by which ministers and people enter the true church. It is by his merits, his intercession, his aid, and his appointment, that they enter. ¶ *Of the sheep.* Of the church.

8. *All that ever came before me.* This does not refer to the prophets, but to those who came pretending to be the pastors or guides of the people. Some have supposed that Jesus referred to those who pretended to be the Messiah before him. But there is not evidence that any such person appeared before the coming of Jesus. It is probable that he rather refers to the scribes and Pharisees, who claimed to be instructors of the people; who claimed the right to regulate the affairs of religion; and whose only aim was to aggrandize themselves, and to oppress the people. See Note, ch. i. 18. When the Saviour says that all were thieves, he speaks in a popular sense, using the word *all* as it is often used in the New Testament, to denote the great mass or majority. ¶ *Thieves and robbers.* See ver. 1; also Jer. xxiii. 1; Ezek. xxxiv. 2—4. This had been the general character of the Pharisees and scribes. They sought wealth, office, ease, at the expense of the people, and thus deserved the character of thieves and robbers. They insinuated themselves slyly as a thief, and

are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: <sup>4</sup> by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.<sup>5</sup>

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

<sup>4</sup> Ver. 1, 7. Rom. v. 1, 2. <sup>5</sup> Ps. cxiii. 1—6; lxxx. 1—3. Isa. xl. 11.

they oppressed, and spared not, like a robber. ¶ *The sheep.* The people of God, the pious and humble portion of the Jewish nation. They did not embrace their doctrine. Though the great mass of the people were corrupted, yet there were always some who were the humble and devoted people of God. Compare Rom. xi. 3, 4. So it will be always. Though the great mass of teachers may be corrupt, yet the true friends of God will mourn in secret places, and refuse to "listen to the instruction that causeth to err."

9. *By me.* By my instruction and merits. ¶ *Shall be saved.* See ch. v. 24. ¶ *Shall go in and out, &c.* This is language applied commonly to flocks. It means that he shall be well supplied, and defended, and led, beside the still waters of salvation.

10 *The thief cometh not, &c.* The thief has no other design in coming but to plunder. So false teachers have no other end in view but to enrich or aggrandize themselves. ¶ *I am come that they might have life.* See Note, ch. v. 24. ¶ *Might have it more abundantly.* Literally, that they may have abundance, or that which abounds. The word denotes that which is not absolutely essential to life, but which is superadded to make life happy. They shall not merely have life, simple, bare, existence, but they shall have all those superadded things which are needful to make that life eminently blessed and happy. It would be eminent mercy to keep men simply from annihilation or hell; but Jesus will give them eternal joy, peace, the society of the

## Jerusalem

shepherd, and  
and am known

ther knoweth  
the Father,  
ay life for the

sheep I have,  
his fold: them  
and they shall  
at "there shall  
no shepherd.

John x. 29. — Matt.  
I. xvi. 17. — Luke  
xxviii. 18. Eph. ii. 14.

wages. — He feels no  
the flock.

*Sheep.* Know my people,  
the word *know* here is  
an affectionate regard, or  
such a knowledge of their  
needs, and their characters,  
deep interest in their wel-  
fare, the word *knoweth* in ver. 15,  
gained by the word *loved*,  
the hearts, the dangers, and  
the people, and his kindness,  
and prompts him to defend

him. — *Am known of mine*,  
is known and loved as their  
Friend. They have seen  
the dangers, and wants; they  
perceive their need of a Saviour; they  
are drawn to him, and they receive and  
obey his doctrines to be such as they  
are. They have no liberty. — And as  
he knows and obeys his Lord, shep-  
erds they renew and obey him who  
can make the lost sheep, and  
them to be down in green pastures.  
As the Father knoweth me, &c.  
John x. 27. — Luke x. 22.  
*giving up life for the sheep.* That  
I give my life as ransom for many  
circumstances. I do this to save them  
from sin, and death, and  
hell. — See ver. 17, 18.

6. *Other sheep.* These are others who  
of the flock of my Father and church.  
*Father.* It is easy to imagine that they  
are their own souls, yet that they would  
be. The words of me whom Father has  
expressed his intention to call, to the bless-  
ings of the Gospel and to salvation. Thus

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because <sup>1</sup> I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 7—12. Heb. ii. 9.

purpose was so sure, and the fact that they would believe on him so certain, that he could use the present tense as if they were already his own. Rom. iv. 17. This purpose was in accordance with the promise, Isa. liii. 11. An instance of a parallel expression occurs in Acts xviii. 10. It was the purpose of God to bless the preaching of Paul, and give him many souls at Corinth as the seals of his ministry. It was so certain that they would believe in the Saviour, that it could be spoken of as if it had already taken place. This certainty could have existed only in consequence of the intention of God that it should be so. It did not consist in any disposition to embrace the gospel which was foreseen, for they were the most corrupt and licentious people of antiquity; and it must have been because God meant that it should be so. Declarations like these are full proof that God has a plan in regard to the salvation of men, and that the number is known and determined by him. Learn, 1. That it is not a question of hap-hazard whether men shall be saved. 2. That there is encouragement for preaching the gospel. There are those whom God means to save. ¶ *Not of this fold.* Not Jews. This is a distinct intimation that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles, a doctrine which was extremely offensive to the Jews. This prediction of the Saviour has been strikingly confirmed in the conversion of millions of the Gentiles to the gospel. ¶ *Them also I must bring.* Bring into the church and kingdom of heaven. This was to be done, not by his personal ministry, but by the labour of his apostles and other ministers. ¶ *One fold.* One church; there shall be no distinction; no peculiar national privileges. The partition between the Jews and the Gentiles shall be broken down, and there shall be no pre-eminence of rank or honour. Eph. ii. 14. Rom. x. 12. ¶ *One shepherd.* That is, the Lord Jesus, the common Saviour, deliverer, and friend of all true believers, in whatever land they were born and whatever tongue they may speak. This shows that Christians of all denominations and countries should feel

18 No man taketh it from me, but <sup>2</sup> I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I

<sup>2</sup> Phil. ii. 6—8.

that they are one, redeemed by the same blood, and going to the same eternal home.

17. *I lay down my life.* I give myself to die for my people, in Jewish and pagan lands. I offer myself a sacrifice to show the willingness of my Father to save. I make an atonement, and thus open the way for their salvation. This proves that the salvation of man was an object dear to God, and that it was a source of peculiar gratification to him that his Son was willing to lay down his life to accomplish his great purposes of benevolence. ¶ *That I might take it again.* Be raised up from the dead, and glorified, and still carry on the work of redemption. See this same sentiment sublimely expressed in Phil. ii. 6—11.

18. *No man taketh it from me.* That is, no one could take it by force, or unless I was willing to yield myself into their hands. He had power to preserve his life, as he showed by so often escaping from the Pharisees: he voluntarily went up to Jerusalem knowing that he would die; he knew of the approach of Judas to betray him; and he expressly told Pilate at his bar that he could have no power at all against him, except it were given him by his Father. Ch. xix. 11. Jesus had a right to lay down his life for the good of men. The patriot dies for his country on the field of battle; the merchant exposes his life for gain; and the Son of God had a right to put himself in the way of danger and of death, when his church and the dying world needed such an atoning sacrifice. This shows the peculiar love of Jesus. His death was voluntary. His coming was voluntary, the fruit of love. His death was the fruit of love. He was permitted to choose the time and mode of his death. He did so choose. He chose the most painful, lingering, ignominious manner of death then known to man, and thus showed his love. ¶ *I have power.* The word often means authority. It includes all necessary power in the case, and the commission or authority of his Father to do it. ¶ *Power to take it again.* This shows that he was divine. A dead

have <sup>1</sup> power to take it again. This commandment <sup>2</sup> have I received of my Father.

19 ¶ There was a division <sup>3</sup> therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath <sup>4</sup> a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ii. 19. <sup>2</sup> Ch. vi. 38. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vii. 40—43; ix. 16. Matt. x. 34, 35. Acts xxiii. 7—10. <sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 20.

man has no power to raise himself from the grave. And as Jesus had this power after he was deceased, it proves that there was some other nature than that which had expired, to which the term *I* might be still applied. None but God can raise the dead; and as Jesus had this power over his own body, it proves that he was divine. ¶ *This commandment.* My Father has appointed this, and commissioned me to do it.

20. *He hath a devil.* Ch. vii. 20. ¶ *Is mad.* Is deranged, or a maniac. His words are incoherent and unintelligible.

21. *Not the words, &c.* His words are sober, grave, pious, full of wisdom. The preaching of Jesus always produced effect. It made bitter enemies, or decided friends. So will all faithful preaching. It is not the fault of the gospel that there are divisions, but of the unbelief and mad passions of men.

22. *The feast of the dedication.* Literally, the feast of the renewing, or of the renovation. This feast was instituted by Judæus Maccabeus in the year 164 before Christ. The temple and city were taken by Antiochus Epiphanes, in the year 167 before Christ. He slew forty thousand inhabitants, and sold forty thousand more as slaves. In addition to this he sacrificed a sow on the altar of burnt offerings, and a broth being made of this he sprinkled it all over the temple. The city and temple were recovered three years afterwards by Judæus Maccabeus, and the temple was purified with great pomp and solemnity. The ceremony of purification continued through eight days, during which Judæus presented magnifi-

Can a devil open <sup>5</sup> the eyes of the blind?

22 ¶ And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. <sup>6</sup>

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him. How long dost thou make <sup>7</sup> us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. ix. 6—12. <sup>6</sup> Acts iii. 11; v. 12. Exod. iv. 11; viii. 19. Isa. xxxv. 5. <sup>7</sup> Or, hold us in suspense.

cent victims, and celebrated the praise of God with hymns and psalms. Josephus, Ant. lib. xii. cap. 11. They decked also the forefront of the temple with crowns of gold and with shields, and the gates and chambers they renewed and hanged doors upon them. On this account it was called the feast of renovation, or dedication. Josephus calls it the feast of lights, because the city was illuminated as expressive of joy. The feast began on the twenty-fifth day of Chisleu, answering to the fifteenth day of December. The festival continued for eight days with continued demonstrations of joy. ¶ *It was winter.* The feast was celebrated in the winter. The word here implies that it was cold and inclement; and this is given as a reason why he walked in Solomon's porch. ¶ *Solomon's porch.* The porch, or covered way on the east of the temple. See Note, Matt. xxi. 12.

24. *Tell us plainly.* The Messiah was predicted as a Shepherd. Jesus had applied that prediction to himself. They supposed that that was an evidence that he claimed to be the Messiah. He also wrought miracles, which they considered as evidence that he was the Christ. Ch. vii. 31. Yet the rulers made a difficulty. They alleged that he was from Galilee, and that the Messiah could not come from thence. Ch. vii. 52. He was poor and despised. He came in a manner contrary to the common expectation. A splendid prince and conqueror had been expected. In this perplexity they came to him for a plain and positive declaration that he was the Messiah.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works<sup>1</sup> that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But<sup>2</sup> ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My<sup>3</sup> sheep hear my voice,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. v. 36.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. viii. 47.    <sup>3</sup> John iv. 6. v. 4.

25. *I told you.* It is not recorded that Jesus had told them in so many words that he was the Christ, but he had used expressions designed to convey the same truth, and which many of them understood as claiming to be the Messiah. See ch. v. 19; viii. 36, 56; x. 1. The expression, "the Son of God," they understood to be equivalent to the Messiah. This he had often used of himself in a sense not to be mistaken. ¶ *The works.* The miracles, such as restoring the blind, curing the sick, &c. ¶ *In my Father's name.* By the power and command of God. Jesus was either the Messiah or an impostor. The Pharisees charged him with being the latter. Ch. ix. 16, 24. Compare Matt. xxvii. 63. But God would not give such power to an impostor. The power of working miracles is an attestation of God to what is taught. See Notes on Matt. iv. 24.

26. *Are not my sheep.* Are not my people, my followers. You do not possess the spirit of meek and humble disciples. Were it not for pride, and prejudice, and vain-glory, for your false notions of the Messiah, and from a determination not to believe, you would have learned from my declarations and works that I am the Christ. ¶ *As I said unto you.* Compare ch. viii. 47.

27. *My sheep.* My church, my people, those who have the true spirit of my followers. Jesus gives this name to his people because it was an illustration which would be well understood in a country abounding in flocks. There is also a striking resemblance, which he proceeds to state, between them. ¶ *I hear my voice.* See ver. 3, 4. Applied to Christians, it means that they hear and obey his commandments. ¶ *I know them.* See ver. 14. ¶ *They follow me.* A flock follows its shepherd to pastures and

and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they<sup>4</sup> shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My<sup>5</sup> Father, which gave<sup>6</sup> them me, is greater than all;

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xvii. 12; xviii. 9. Heb. vii. 25.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiv. 28.    <sup>6</sup> Ch. vi. 9, 11, 37; xvii. 2.

streams. Ver. 3. Christians not only obey Christ, but they imitate him; they go where his Spirit and providence lead them; they yield themselves to his guidance, and seek to be led by him. When Jesus was upon earth, many of his disciples followed or attended him from place to place. Hence Christians are called his followers, and in Rev. xiv. 4, they are described as "they that follow the Lamb."

28. *I give unto them eternal life.* See ch. v. 24. ¶ *Shall never perish.* To *perish* here means to be destroyed, or to be punished in hell. Ch. iii. 15; xvii. 12. Matt. x. 28; xviii. 14. Rom. ii. 12. 1 Cor. i. 18. In all these places the word refers to future punishment, and the declaration of the Saviour is, that his followers, his true disciples, shall never be cast away. The original is expressed with remarkable strength, "They shall not be destroyed for ever." Syriac, "They shall not perish to eternity." This is spoken of all Christians; that is, of all who ever possess the character of true followers of Christ, and who can be called his flock. ¶ *Shall any.* The word *any* refers to any power that might attempt it. It will apply either to men or to devils. It is an affirmation that no man, however eloquent in error, or persuasive in infidelity, or cunning in argument, or mighty in rank; and that no devil, with all his malice, power, cunning, or allurements, shall be able to pluck them from his hand. ¶ *Pluck them.* In the original to rob; to seize and bear away as a robber does his prey. Jesus holds them so secure and so certainly, that no foe can surprise him as a robber does, or overcome him by force. ¶ *My hand.* The *hand* is that by which we hold or secure an object. It means that Jesus has them safely in his own care and keeping. Compare Rom. viii. 38, 39.

29. *Which gave them me.* See ch. vi.

and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I <sup>1</sup> and my Father are one.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 38. Ch. i. 1, 2; v. 17, 23; viii. 58; xvii. 11, 22.

37. ¶ *Is greater.* Is more powerful. ¶ *Than all.* Than all others, men, angels, devils. The word includes every thing, every thing that could attempt to pluck them away from God; in other words, it means that God is supreme. It implies further that God will keep them, and will so control all other beings and things as that they shall be safe. ¶ *None is able.* None has power to do it. In these two verses we are taught the following important truths: 1. That Christians are given by God the Father to Christ. 2. That Jesus gives to them eternal life, or procures by his death and intercession, and imparts to them by his Spirit, that religion which shall result in eternal life. 3. That both the Father and the Son are pledged to keep them so that they shall never fall away and perish. It would be impossible for any language to teach more explicitly that the saints shall persevere. 4. That there is no power in man or devils to defeat the purpose of the Redeemer to save his people. We also see our safety, if we truly, humbly, cordially, and daily commit ourselves to God the Saviour. In no other way can we have evidence that we are his people than by such a persevering resignation of ourselves to him, to obey his law, and to follow him through evil report or good report. If we do that, we are safe. If we do not that, we have no evidence of piety, and are not, cannot be safe.

30. *I and my Father are one.* The word translated *one* is not in the masculine, but in the neuter gender. It expresses union, but not the precise nature of the union. It may express any union, and the particular kind intended is to be inferred from the connexion. In the previous verse he had said that he and his Father were united in the same object; that is, in redeeming and preserving his people. It was this that gave occasion for this remark. Many interpreters have understood this as referring to union of design and of plan. The words may bear this construction. In this way they were understood by Erasmus, Calvin, Bucer,

31 Then <sup>a</sup> the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many

<sup>a</sup> Ch. viii. 59.

and others. Most of the fathers understood them however, as referring to the oneness, or unity of nature, between the Father and the Son. And that this was the design of Christ appears probable from the following considerations: 1. The question in debate was not about his being united with the Father in plan and counsel, but in power. He affirmed that he was able to rescue and keep his people from all enemies, or that he had power superior to men and devils; that is, that he had supreme power over all creation. He affirmed the same of his Father. In this, therefore, they were united. But this was an attribute only of God, and they thus understood him as claiming equality to God in regard to omnipotence. 2. The Jews understood him as affirming his equality with God. For they took up stones to punish him for blasphemy, ver. 31, 33; and they said to him that they understood him as affirming that he was God. 3. Jesus did not deny that it was his intention to be so understood. See Notes on ver. 34—37. 4. He immediately made another declaration implying the same thing, leaving the same impression, and which they attempted to punish in the same manner, ver. 37—39. If Jesus had not intended so to be understood, it cannot be easily reconciled with moral honesty that he did not distinctly disavow that such was his intention. The Jews were well acquainted with their own language. They understood him in this manner; and he left this impression on their minds.

31. *The Jews took up stones.* Stoning was the punishment of a blasphemer. Lev. xxiv. 14—16. They considered Jesus guilty of blasphemy because he made himself equal with God, ver. 33. ¶ *Again.* They had before plotted against his life, ch. v. 16, 18, and once at least they had taken up stones to destroy him, ch. viii. 59.

32. *Many good works.* Many miracles of benevolence; healing the sick, &c. His miracles were good, as they tended to promote the happiness of men, and



good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because<sup>1</sup> that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 30. Ch. v. 18. Psa. lxxxii. 6. Rom. xiii. 1.

were proofs of his benevolence. He had performed no other; he knew that they could charge him with no other, and he confidently appealed to them as witnesses of that. Happy would it be if all, when they are opposed and persecuted, could appeal even to their persecutors in proof of their own innocence.

33. *For blasphemy.* See Note, Matt. ix. 3. ¶ *Makest thyself God.* See Note, ch. v. 18. This shows how they understood what he had said. ¶ *Makest thyself.* Doest claim to be God; or thy language implies this.

34—38. *Jesus answered them.* The answer of Jesus consists of two parts. The first, ver. 34—36, shows that they ought not to object to his use of the word God, even if he were no more than a man. The second, ver. 37, 38, repeats substantially what he had before said; left the same impression; and in proof of it he appealed to his works.

34. *In your law.* Psa. lxxxii. 6. The word *law*, here, is used to designate the Old Testament. ¶ *I said.* The Psalmist said, or God said by the Psalmist. ¶ *Ye are gods?* This was said of magistrates, on account of the dignity and honour of their office, and it shows that the word translated gods in that place might be applied to man. Such a use of the word is however rare. See instances in Exod. iv. 16; vii. 1.

35. *Unto whom the word of God came.* That is, who were his servants, or who received their dignity and honour only because the law of God was entrusted to them. The *word of God* here means the command of God; his commission to them to do justice. ¶ *The scripture cannot be broken.* See Matt. v. 19. The authority of the scripture is final; it cannot be set aside. The meaning is, if, therefore, the scripture uses the word god

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken;

36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified,<sup>2</sup> and sent

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vi. 37. Isa. xi. 2, 3; xlix. 1, 3.

as applied to magistrates, it settles the question that it is right to apply the term to those in office and authority. If applied to them, it may be to others in similar offices. It cannot therefore be blasphemy to use this word as applicable to a personage so much more exalted than mere magistrates as the Messiah.

36. *Whom the Father hath sanctified.* The word *sanctify* with us means to make holy. But this is not its meaning here, for the Son of God was always holy. The original word means to set apart from a common to a sacred use, to devote to a sacred purpose, and to designate or consecrate to a holy office. This is the meaning here. God has consecrated or appointed his Son to be his Messenger or Messiah to mankind. See Exod. xxviii. 41; xxix. 1, 44. Lev. viii. 30. ¶ *And sent into the world.* As the Messiah, an office far more exalted than that of magistrates. ¶ *I am the Son of God.* This the Jews evidently understood as the same as saying that he was equal with God. This expression he had often applied to himself. See ch. v. The meaning of this place may be thus expressed: You charge me with blasphemy. The foundation of that charge is the use of the name God, or the Son of God, applied to myself; yet that same term is applied in the scriptures to magistrates. The use of it there shows that it is right to apply it to those who sustain important offices. And especially you, Jews, ought not to attempt to found a charge of blasphemy on the application of a word to the Messiah which in your own scriptures is applied to all magistrates. And we may remark here: 1. That Jesus did not deny that he meant to apply the term to himself. 2. He did not deny that it was properly applied to him. 3. He did not deny that it implied that he was God. He

into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am <sup>1</sup> the Son of God?

37 If <sup>2</sup> I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father *is* in me, and I in him.

39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place <sup>3</sup> where John

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii. 6.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 10, 11; xv. 24.  
<sup>3</sup> Ch. i. 28.

affirmed only that they were inconsistent, and were not authorized to bring a charge of blasphemy for the application of the name to himself.

37. *The works of my Father.* The very works that my Father does. See Note, ch. v. 17. The *works of his Father* are those which God only can do. As Jesus did them, it shows that the name Son of God, implying equality with God, was properly applied to him. This shows conclusively that he meant to be understood as claiming to be equal with God. So the Jews naturally understood him, ver. 39, and they were left with this impression on their minds.

38. *Believe the works.* Though you do not credit me, yet consider my *works*, for they prove that I came from God. No one could do them unless he were sent of God. ¶ *Father is in me*, &c. Most intimately connected. See John v. 36. This expression denotes most intimate union, such as can exist in no other case. See Notes, ch. xvii. 21; Matt. xi. 27.

39. *Sought again to take him.* They evidently understood him as claiming still equality with God, and under this impression Jesus left them. Nor can it be doubted that he intended to leave them with this impression; and if so, then he is divine. ¶ *He escaped.* See ch. viii. 59.

40. *Where John—baptized.* At Bethabara, or Bethany, ch. i. 28.

41. *No miracle.* He did not confirm his mission by working *miracles*, but he

at first baptized; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake <sup>4</sup> of this man were true.

42 And many believed on him there.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Lazarus dies and is raised, 1—44. Many believe, 45, 46. Council respecting Jesus, 47—57.*

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany,

<sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 30—36. Matt. iii. 11, 12.

showed that he was a prophet by foretelling the character and success of Jesus. Either miracle or prophecy is conclusive proof of a divine mission, for no man can foretell a future event, or work a miracle, except by the special aid of God. It may be remarked that the people of that region were properly prepared by the ministry of John for the preaching of Jesus. The persecution of the Jews was the occasion of his going there, and thus the wrath of man was made to praise him. It has commonly happened that the opposition of the wicked has resulted in the increased success of the cause which they have persecuted. God takes the wise in their own craftiness, and brings glory to himself and salvation to sinners, out of the pride, and passions, and rage of wicked men.

## CHAPTER XI.

1. *A certain man was sick.* The resurrection of Lazarus has been recorded only by John. Various reasons have been conjectured why the other evangelists did not mention so signal a miracle. The most probable is, that at the time they wrote, Lazarus was still living. The miracle was well known, and yet to have recorded it might have exposed Lazarus to opposition and persecution from the Jews. See ch. xii. 10, 11. Besides, John wrote for Christians who were out of Palestine. The other gospels were written chiefly for those who were in Judea. There was the more need, therefore, that he should enter minutely into the account of the miracle.

the town of <sup>1</sup> Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was that Mary <sup>2</sup> which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, <sup>3</sup> he whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard that, he

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 38, 39. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xii. 3. Mark xiv. 3. <sup>3</sup> Heb. xii. 6. Rev. iii. 19.

while the others did not deem it necessary or proper to record an event so well known. ¶ *Bethany*. A village on the eastern declivity of the mount of Olives. See Note, Matt. xxi. 1. ¶ *The town of Mary*. The place where she lived. At that place also lived Simon the leper, Matt. xxvi. 6, and there our Lord spent considerable part of his time when he was in Judea. The transaction recorded in this chapter occurred nearly four months after those mentioned in the previous chapter. Those occurred in December, and these at the approach of the passover in April.

2. *It was that Mary, &c.* See Notes, Matt. xxvi. 7.

3. *Whom thou lovest*. Ver. 5. This family were among the few peculiar and intimate friends of our Lord. He was much with them, and showed them marks of special friendship, Luke x. 42; and they bestowed upon him peculiar proofs of affection in return. This shows that peculiar attachments are lawful for Christians, and that those friendships are peculiarly lovely which are tempered and sweetened with the spirit of Christ. Friendships should always be cemented by religion; and one main end of those attachments should be that we may aid one another in the great business of preparing to die. ¶ *Sent unto him*. They believed that he had power to heal him, ver. 21, though they did not then seem to suppose that he could raise him if he died. Perhaps there were two reasons why they sent for him: one, because they supposed he would be desirous of seeing his friend; and the other, because they supposed he could restore him. In sickness we should implore the aid and presence of Jesus. He only can restore

said, This sickness is not unto death, but <sup>4</sup> for the glory of God. that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

<sup>4</sup> Ver. 40. Ch. ix. 3.

us and our friends; he only can perform for us the office of a friend when all other friends fail; and he only can cheer us with the hope of a blessed resurrection.

4. *This sickness is not unto death*. The word *death* here is equivalent to remaining under death. Jesus evidently did not intend to deny that Lazarus would die. The words which he immediately adds show that he would expire, and that he would raise him up to show forth the power and glory of God. Compare ver. 11. Those words cannot be understood on any other supposition than that he expected to raise him up. The Saviour often used expressions similar to this, to fix the attention on what he was about to say in explanation. The sense may be thus expressed: his sickness is not fatal. It is not designed for his death, but to furnish an opportunity for a signal display of the glory of God, and to furnish a standing proof of the truth of religion. It is intended to display the power of the Son of God, and to be a proof at once of the truth of his mission, of his friendship for this family, his mild, tender, peculiar love as a man, of his power and glory as the Messiah, and of the great doctrine that the dead will rise. ¶ *For the glory of God*. That God may be honoured. See ch. ix. 3. ¶ *That the Son of God, &c.* The glory of God and of his Son is the same. That which promotes the one promotes also the other. Few things could do this more than the miracle which follows, evincing at once the lovely and tender character of Jesus as a man and a friend, and his power as the equal with God.

6. *He abode two days*. Probably Lazarus died soon after the messengers left him. Jesus knew that, ver. 11, and did not hasten to Judea, but remained two

7 Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judæa again.

8 *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late <sup>1</sup> sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? <sup>2</sup>

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If <sup>3</sup> any man walk in the day, he stumbleth

not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night, <sup>4</sup> he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; <sup>5</sup> but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xx. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xii.

35.

<sup>4</sup> Eccl. ii. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Deut. xxxi. 16.

Acts vii.

60. <sup>1</sup> Cor. xv. 18, 51.

days longer where he was that there might not be the possibility of doubt that he was dead, so that when he came there he had been dead four days, ver. 39. This shows moreover that he intended to raise him up. If he had not, it could hardly be reconciled with friendship thus to remain, without any reason, away from an afflicted family. ¶ *Where he was.* At Bethabara, ch. i. 28; x. 40, about thirty miles from Bethany. This was about a day's journey, and it renders it probable that Lazarus died soon after the message was sent. One day would be occupied before the message came to him; two days he remained; one day would be occupied by him in going to Bethany, so that Lazarus had been dead four days, ver. 39, when Jesus arrived.

8. *Of late.* About four months before. Ch. x. 31.

9, 10. *Twelve hours.* The Jews divided the day from sunrise to sunset into twelve equal parts. A similar illustration our Saviour uses in ch. ix. 4, 5. See Notes on that place. ¶ *If any man walk.* If any man travels. The illustration here is taken from a traveller. The conversation was respecting a journey into Judæa, and our Lord, as was his custom, took the illustration from the case before him. ¶ *He stumbleth not.* He is able, having light, to make his journey safely. He sees the obstacles or dangers, and can avoid them. ¶ *The light of this world.* The light by which the world is illuminated, that is, the light of the sun. ¶ *In the night.* In darkness he is unable to see danger or obstacles, and to avoid them. His journey is unsafe and perilous, or in other words, it is not a proper time to travel. ¶ *No light in him.* He

sees no light. It is dark; his eyes admit no light within him to direct his way. This description is figurative, and it is difficult to fix the meaning. Probably the intention was: 1. That there was an allotted or appointed time for Jesus to live and do his Father's will, represented here by the twelve hours of the day. 2. Though his life was nearly spent, yet it was not entirely spent. A remnant of it was left. 3. A traveller journeyed on till night. It was as proper for him to travel at the twelfth hour as any other. 4. So it was proper for Jesus to labour until the close. It was the proper time for him to work. The night of death came, and no work could then be done. 5. God would defend him in this until the appointed time of his death. He had nothing to fear, therefore, in Judæa from the Jews, until it was the will of God that he should die. He was safe in his hand, and he went fearlessly into the midst of his foes, trusting in Him. This passage teaches us that we should be diligent to the end of life; fearless of enemies when we know that God requires us to labour, and confidently committing ourselves to Him who is able to shield us, and in whose hand, it we have a conscience void of offence, we are safe.

11. *Lazarus sleepeth.* Is dead. The word *sleep* is applied to death: 1. Because of the resemblance between them, as sleep is the "kinsman of death." In this sense it is often used by pagan writers. But, 2. In the scriptures it is used to intimate that death will not be final, that there will be an awaking out of this sleep, or a resurrection. It is a beautiful and tender expression, removing all that is dreadful in death, and filling the mind

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death : but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that <sup>1</sup> I was not there, to the intent ye may believe ; nevertheless let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 30 ; xvii. 19. Gen. xxvi. 24. Isa. liv. 15.

with the idea of calm repose, after a life of toil, with a reference to a future resurrection in increased vigour and renovated powers. In this sense it is applied in the scriptures usually to the saints. Matt. ix. 24. 1 Cor. xi. 30 ; xv. 51. 1 Thess. iv. 14 ; v. 10.

12. *If he sleep, he shall do well.* Sleep was regarded by the Jews in sickness as a favourable symptom. Hence it was said among them, "Sleep in sickness is a sign of recovery, because it shows that the violence of the disease has abated." (Lightfoot.) This seems to have been the meaning of the disciples. They intimated that if he had this symptom, there was no need that Jesus should go into Judea to restore him.

15. *I am glad, &c.* The meaning of this verse may be thus expressed: If I had been there during his sickness, the entreaties of his sisters and friends would have prevailed with me to restore him to health. I could not have refused them without appearing to be unkind. Though a restoration to health would have been a miracle, and sufficient to convince you; yet the miracle of raising him after being four days dead, will be far more impressive, and on that account I rejoice that an opportunity is thus given so strikingly to confirm your faith. ¶ *To the intent.* To furnish you evidence on which you might be established in the belief that I am the Messiah.

16. *Thomas, which is called Didymus.* These names express the same thing. One is Hebrew, and the other Greek. The name means a twin. ¶ *Die with him.*

disciples, <sup>2</sup> Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, <sup>3</sup> about fifteen furlongs off :

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to <sup>4</sup> comfort them concerning their brother.

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 8. Ch. xiii. 37. Matt. xxvi. 35. Luke xxii. 33. <sup>3</sup> I. e. about two miles. <sup>4</sup> 1 Chron. vii. 22. Job ii. 11 ; xiii. 11. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Thess. iv. 18.

It has been much doubted by critics whether the word *him* refers to Lazarus or to Jesus. They who refer it to Lazarus suppose the meaning to be, Let us go and die, for what have we to hope for if Jesus returns into Judea? Lately, they attempted to stone him, and now they will put him to death, and we also, like Lazarus, shall be dead. This expression is supposed to be added by John to show the slowness with which Thomas believed, and his readiness to doubt without the fullest evidence. See ch. xx. 25. Others suppose, probably with more correctness, that the expression refers to Jesus : "He is about to throw himself into danger. The Jews lately sought his life, and will seek it again. They will now put him to death. But let us not forsake him. Let us attend him, and die with him." It may be remarked that this, not less than the other mode of interpretation, expresses the doubts of Thomas about the miracle which Jesus was about to work.

17. *In the grave.* It was sometimes the custom to embalm the dead. But in this case there does not seem to have been any embalming. Lazarus was probably buried soon after death.

18. *Nigh unto Jerusalem.* This is added to show that it was easy for many of the Jews to come to the place. The news that Jesus was there, and the account of the miracle, would also be easily carried to the sanhedrim. ¶ *Fifteen furlongs.* Nearly two miles. It was directly east from Jerusalem.

19. *Many of the Jews.* Probably their distant relatives or their friends

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever <sup>1</sup> thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 31.

¶ *To comfort.* These visits of consolation were commonly extended to seven days. (Grotius. Lightfoot.)

20. *Then Martha, &c.* To Martha was entrusted the management of the affairs of the family. Luke x. 40. It is probable that she first heard of his coming, and without waiting to inform her sister, went immediately out to meet him. See Ver. 28. ¶ *Sat still in the house.* The word *still* is not in the original. It means that she remained sitting in the house. The common posture of grief among the Jews was that of sitting. Job ii. 8. Ezek. viii. 14. Often this grief was so excessive as to fix the person in astonishment, and render him immovable, or prevent his being affected by any external objects. It is possible that the evangelist meant to intimate this of Mary's grief. Comp. Ezra ix. 3, 4; Neh. i. 4; Isa. xlvii. 1.

22. *Whatsoever thou wilt ask of God.* Whatever is necessary to our consolation that thou wilt ask, and thou canst obtain. It is possible that she meant gently to intimate that he could raise him up, and restore him again to them.

23. *Thy brother shall rise again.* Martha had spoken of the power of Jesus. He said nothing of himself in reply. It was not customary for him to speak of himself, unless it was demanded by necessity. It cannot be doubted that by *rising* again, here, Jesus referred to the act which he was about to perform. But as Martha understood it, referring to the future resurrection, it was full of consolation. The idea that departed friends shall rise to glory is one that fills the mind with joy, and one which we owe to the religion of Christ exclusively.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the <sup>2</sup> resurrection at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the <sup>3</sup> resurrection, and the life: <sup>4</sup> he that believeth in me, though <sup>5</sup> he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever <sup>6</sup> liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

<sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 29. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vi. 40, 44. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xiv. 6. Isa. xxxviii. 16. 1 John i. 2. <sup>5</sup> Job xix. 26. Isa. xxvi. 19. Rom. iv. 17. <sup>6</sup> Ch. iii. 15; iv. 14.

24. *At the last day.* The day of judgment. Of this Martha was fully convinced. But this was not all which she desired. She in this manner delicately hinted, what she did not presume expressly to declare, her wish that Jesus might even now raise him up.

25. *I am the resurrection.* I am the author, or the cause, of the resurrection. It so depends on my power and will, that it may be said that I am the resurrection itself. This is a most expressive way of saying that the whole doctrine of the resurrection came from him, and the whole power to effect it was his. In a similar manner he is said to be made of God unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." 1 Cor. i. 30. ¶ *And the life.* John i. 4. As the resurrection of all depends on him, he intimated that it was not indispensable that it should be deferred to the last day. He had power to raise the dead now as well as then. ¶ *Though he were dead.* Faith does not preserve from temporal death. But although the believer, as others, shall die a temporal death, yet he will hereafter have life. Even if he dies, he shall hereafter live. ¶ *Shall he live.* Shall be restored to life in the resurrection.

26. *Whosoever liveth.* Jesus had just spoken of the prospects of the pious dead. He now says that the same prospects are before the living who have like faith. Greek: "Every one living, and believing on me." ¶ *Shall never die.* As the dead, though dead, shall yet live, so the living shall have the same kind of life. They shall never come into eternal death. See ch. vi. 50, 51, 54, 58. Greek.

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master <sup>1</sup> is come, and calleth <sup>2</sup> for thee.

29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews <sup>3</sup> then which were with her in the house, and com-

forted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if <sup>4</sup> thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and <sup>5</sup> was troubled,

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiii. 13.    <sup>2</sup> Mark. x. 49.    <sup>3</sup> Ver. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Ver. 21, 37. Ch. iv. 49.    <sup>5</sup> He troubled himself.

"Shall by no means die for ever." ¶ *Believest thou this?* This question was doubtless asked because it implied that he was then able to raise up Lazarus, and because it was a proper time for her to test her own faith. The time of affliction is a favourable period to try ourselves, to ascertain whether we have faith. If we still have confidence in God, if we look to him for comfort in such seasons, it is good evidence that we are his friends. He that loves God, when he takes away his comforts, has the best evidence possible of true attachment to him.

27. *Yea, Lord.* This was a noble and most proper confession. It showed her full confidence in him as the Messiah, and her full belief that all that he said was true. See Matt. xvi. 16.

28. *She went her way.* Jesus probably directed her to go, though the evangelist has not recorded it, for she said to Mary, "the Master calleth for thee." ¶ *Secretly.* Privately. So that the others did not hear her. This was done, perhaps, to avoid confusion, or because it was probable that if they knew Jesus was coming, they would have made opposition. Perhaps she doubted whether Jesus desired it to be known that he had come. ¶ *The Master is come.* This appears to have been the appellation by which he was known in the family. It

means literally teacher, and was a title which he claimed for himself. *Matt.* xxiii. 8, 10. The Syriac has it, "Our Master."

31. *Saying, She goeth unto the grave.* Syriac: "They thought that she went to weep." They had not heard Martha call her. The first days of mourning among the Jews were observed with great solemnity, and many ceremonies of grief.

33. *He groaned in the Spirit.* The word rendered *groaned*, here, commonly denotes to be angry or indignant; or to reprove severely, denoting violent agitation of mind. Here it also evidently denotes violent agitation, not from anger, but from grief. He saw the sorrow of others, and he was also moved with sympathy and love. The word *groan* denotes an expression of internal sorrow by a peculiar sound. The word here does not mean that utterance was given to the internal emotion, but that it was deep and agitating, though internal. ¶ *In the spirit.* In the mind. See Acts xix. 21. "Paul purposed in spirit," i. e., in his mind. *Matt. v. 3.* ¶ *Was troubled.* Was affected with grief. Perhaps this expression denotes that his countenance was troubled, or gave indications of sorrow. (Grotius.)

34. *Where have ye laid him?* Jesus spoke as a man. In all this transaction he manifested the deep sympathy of a

35 Jesus wept.<sup>1</sup>

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which<sup>2</sup> opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away<sup>3</sup> the stone. Martha, the sister of

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxiii. 9. Luke xix. 41. Heb. ii. 16, 17.  
<sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 6. <sup>3</sup> Mark xvi. 3.

man; and though he who could raise him up could also know where he was, yet he chose to lead them to the grave by inducing them to point the way, and hence he asked this question.

35. *Jesus wept.* It has been remarked that this is the shortest verse in the Bible, but it is exceedingly important and tender. It shows the Lord Jesus as a friend, a tender friend, and evinces his character as a man. And from this we learn, 1. That the most tender personal friendship is not inconsistent with the most pure religion. Piety binds stronger the ties of friendship; makes more tender the emotions of love; and seals and sanctifies the affections of friends. 2. It is right, it is natural, it is indispensable, for the Christian to sympathize with others in their afflictions. Rom. xii. 15. 3. Sorrow at the death of friends is right. It is right to weep. It is the expression of nature, and religion does not forbid or condemn it. All that religion does in that case, is to temper and chasten our grief, to teach us to mourn with submission to God, to weep without murmuring, and to seek to banish tears, not by hardening the heart or forgetting the friend, but by bringing the soul, made tender by grief, to receive the sweet influences of religion, and to find calmness and peace in the God of all consolation. 4. We have here an instance of the tenderness of the character of Jesus. The same Saviour wept over Jerusalem, and felt deeply for poor dying sinners. To the same tender and compassionate Saviour Christians may now come, Heb. iv. 15;

him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time<sup>4</sup> he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said<sup>5</sup> I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said,<sup>6</sup> Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me

<sup>4</sup> Psa. xlix. 7, 9. Acts ii. 27. <sup>5</sup> Ver. 4, 23.  
<sup>6</sup> Ch. xii. 28—30.

and to him the penitent sinner may also come, knowing that he will not cast him away.

38. *It was a cave.* This was a common mode of burial. See Note, Matt. viii. 28. ¶ *A stone lay upon it.* Over the mouth of the cave. See Matt. xxvii. 60.

39. *Four days.* This shows that there could be no deception in this case. It could not have been a case of suspended animation. All these circumstances are mentioned to show that there was no imposture. Impostors do not mention minute circumstances like these. They deal in generals only. Every part of this narrative bears the marks of truth.

40. *Said I not unto thee?* This was implied in what Jesus had said about the resurrection of her brother. Ver. 23—25, There would be a manifestation of the glory of God in raising him up, which she would be permitted, with all others, to behold. ¶ *The glory of God.* The power and goodness displayed in the resurrection. It is probable that Martha did not expect that Jesus would raise him up, but supposed that he went there merely to see the corpse. Hence, when he directed them to take away the stone, she suggested that by that time the body was offensive.

41. *Lifted up his eyes.* In an attitude of prayer. See Matt. xiv. 19. Luke xviii. 13. ¶ *I thank thee that thou hast heard me.* It is possible that John has recorded here only the sum or substance of the prayer on this occasion. The thanks which Jesus renders here are evidently in view of the fact that power



42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had

had been committed to him to raise up Lazarus. On account of the people, and the signal proof which would be furnished of the truth of his mission, he expressed his thanks to God. In all his doings he recognized his union with the Father, and his dependence on him as Mediator.

42. *And I knew.* "As for me. So far as I am concerned. I had no anxiety, no doubt as to myself, that I should always be heard; but the particular ground of gratitude is the benefit that will result to those who are witnesses." Jesus never prayed in vain. He never attempted to work a miracle in vain. And in all his miracles, the ground of his joy was not that he was to be praised or honoured, but that others were to be benefited, and God glorified.

43. *A loud voice.* Greek, "A great voice." Syriac, "A high voice." This was distinctly asserting his power. He uttered a distinct, audible voice, that there might be no suspicion of charm or incantation. The ancient magicians and jugglers performed their wonders by whispering and muttering. See Notes on Isa. viii. 19. Jesus spoke openly and audibly, and asserted thus his power. So also in the day of judgment, he will call the dead with a great sound of a trumpet. Matt. xxiv. 31. 1 Thess. iv. 16. ¶ *Lazarus, come forth.* Here we may remark, 1. That Jesus did this by his own power. 2. The power of raising the dead is the highest power of which we can conceive. The ancient heathen declared it to be even beyond the power of God. It implies not merely giving life to the deceased body, but the power of entering the world of spirits, of recalling the departed soul, and of re-uniting it with the body. He that could do this must be omniscient as well as omnipotent; and if Jesus did it by his own power, it proves that he was divine. 3. This is a striking illustration of the general resurrection. In the same manner Jesus will raise all the dead. This miracle shows that it is possible, shows

spoken, he cried with a loud voice. Lazarus, come forth.

44 And <sup>1</sup> he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face <sup>2</sup> was

<sup>1</sup> Kln. xvii. 22. 2 Kln. iv. 34, 35. Luke vii. 14, 15. Acts xx. 9-12. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xx. 6, 7.

the way in which it will be done by the voice of the Son of God, and demonstrates the certainty that he will do it. O how important it is that we be prepared for that moment when his voice shall be heard in our silent tombs, and he shall call us forth again to life!

44. *He that was dead.* The same man, body and soul. ¶ *Bound hand and foot.* It is not certain whether the whole body and limbs were bound together, or each limb separately. When they embalmed a person, the whole body and limbs were swathed or bound together by strips of linen, involved around it to keep together the aromatics with which the body was embalmed. This is the condition of Egyptian mummies. See Acts v. 6. But it is not certain that this was always the mode. Perhaps the body was simply involved in a winding sheet. No coffins being used, the body itself was more carefully and elaborately wrapt and swathed than is common or desirable where coffins are used. In this method the body was stretched out, and the arms laid straight by the sides, after which the whole body, from head to foot, was wrapt round tightly in many folds of linen or cotton cloth. Or, to be more precise, a great length of cloth was taken, and rolled round the body until the whole was enveloped, and every part was covered with several folds of cloth. The ends were then sewed, to keep the whole firm and compact; or else a narrow bandage was wound over the whole, forming, ultimately, the exterior surface. The body, when thus enfolded and swathed, retains the profile of the human form; but, as in the Egyptian mummies, the legs were not folded separately, but together, and the arms also were not distinguished, but confined to the sides in the general envelope. Hence it is clearly impossible for a person thus treated to move his arms or legs, if restored to existence. The body of Lazarus was swathed in some different manner from this. The word rendered grave-

bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen <sup>1</sup> the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

46 But some of them went

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ii. 23; x. 42; xii. 11, 18.

*clothes* denotes also the bands or clothes in which new-born infants are involved. He went forth, but his walking was impeded by the bands or clothes in which he was involved. ¶ *And his face, &c.* This was a common thing when they buried their dead. See ch. xx. 7. It is not known whether the whole face was covered in this manner, or only the forehead. In the Egyptian mummies, it is only the forehead that is thus bound. ¶ *Loose him.* Remove the bandages, so that he may walk freely. The effect of this miracle is said to have been, that many believed on Jesus. It may be remarked in regard to it, that there could not be a more striking proof of his divine mission and power. There could be here no possibility of deception. 1. The friends of Lazarus believed him to be dead. In this they could not be deceived. There could have been among them no design to deceive. 2. He had been four days dead. It could not be a case, therefore, of suspended animation. 3. Jesus was at a distance at the time of his death. There was, therefore, no agreement to attempt to impose on others. 4. No higher power can be conceived than that of raising the dead. 5. It was not possible to impose on the sisters, and to convince them that their brother was restored to life, if it was not really so. 6. There were many present who were convinced also. God had so ordered it that to this miracle there should be many witnesses. There was no concealment, no jugglery, no secrecy. The miracle was performed publicly, in open day, and was witnessed by many who followed them to the grave. Ver. 31. 7. Others who saw it, and did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah, went and told it to the Pharisees. But they did not deny that Jesus had raised up Lazarus. They could not deny it. The very ground of their alarm, the very reason

their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

47 ¶ Then <sup>2</sup> gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xii. 19; Psa. ii. 2-4. Matt. xxvi. 3; xxvii. 1, 2. Acts iv. 5, 6, 16, 17; v. 24.

why they went, was, that he had actually done it. Nor did the Pharisees dare to call the fact in question. If they could have done it, they would. But it was not possible. For, 8. Lazarus was yet alive, ch. xii. 10, and the fact of his resurrection could not be denied. Every circumstance in this account is plain, simple, consistent, bearing all the marks of truth. But if Jesus performed this miracle, his religion is true. God would not give such power to an impostor; and unless it can be proved that this account is false, we ask, can it be doubted that the christian religion is from God?

46. *Some of them, &c.* We see here the different effect which the word and works of God will have on different individuals. Some are converted, and others are hardened. Yet the evidence of this miracle was as clear to the one as to the other. But they would not be convinced.

47. *A council.* A meeting of the sanhedrim, or great council of the nation. Note, Matt. ii. 4. They claimed the right of regulating all the affairs of religion. Note, ch. i. 19. ¶ *What do we?* What measures are we taking to arrest the progress of his sentiments? ¶ *Doeth many miracles.* If they admitted that he performed miracles, it was clear what they ought to do. They should have received him as the Messiah. It may be asked if they really believed that he worked miracles, why did they not believe on him? To this may be answered, that they did not doubt that impostors might work miracles. See Matt. xxiv. 24. To this opinion they were led, probably, by the wonders which the magicians performed in Egypt, Exod. vii. viii., and by the passage in Deut. xiii. 1. As they regarded the tendency of the doctrines of Jesus to draw off the people from the worship of God, and from keeping his law, ch. ix. 16, they did not suppose

48 If we let him thus alone, all men <sup>1</sup> will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them, <sup>2</sup> named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 19.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 14. Luke iii. 2. Acts iv. 6.

themselves bound to follow him even if he did work miracles.

48. *All men.* That is, all men among the Jews. The whole nation. ¶ *And the Romans shall come.* They were then subject to the Romans; tributary, and dependent. Whatever privileges they had, they held at the will of the Roman emperor. They believed, or feigned to believe, that Jesus was intending to set up a temporal kingdom. As he claimed to be the Messiah, so they supposed of course that he designed to be a temporal prince; and they professed to believe that this claim was in fact hostility to the Roman emperor. They supposed that it would involve the nation of course in war if he was not arrested, and that the effect would be that they would be vanquished and destroyed. It was on this charge that they at last arraigned him before Pilate. Luke xxiii. 2, 3. ¶ *Will take away.* This expression means to destroy, to ruin, to overthrow. Luke viii. 12. Acts vi. 13, 14. ¶ *Our place.* This probably refers to the temple. It was called the *place* by way of eminence, as being the chief or principal place on earth, being the seat of the peculiar worship of God. This place was utterly destroyed by the Romans. See Notes on Matt. xxiv. ¶ *And nation.* The nation or people of the Jews.

49. *Caiaphas.* See Note on Luke iii. 2. ¶ *Being high priest that same year.* It is probable that the office of high priest was at first for life, if there was no conduct that rendered the person unworthy the office. In that case the incumbent was removed. Thus, Abiathar was removed by Solomon. 1 Kin. ii. 27. Subsequently the kings, and especially the conquerors of Judea, claimed and exercised the right of removing the high priest at pleasure; so that, in the time of

50 Nor consider that it is <sup>3</sup> expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied <sup>4</sup> that Jesus should die for that nation;

<sup>3</sup> Luke xxiv. 46.    <sup>4</sup> Num. xxiv. 2, 14-25.

the Romans, the office was held but a short time. [See the Chronological Table at the end of this volume.] Caiaphas held the office about ten years. ¶ *Ye know nothing at all.* That is, you know nothing respecting the subject under consideration. You are fools to hesitate about so plain a case. It is probable that there was a party, even in the sanhedrim, that was secretly in favour of Jesus as the Messiah. Of that party Nicodemus was certainly one. See ch. iii. 1, vii. 50, 51, xi. 45, xii. 42.

50. *It is expedient for us.* It is better for us. Literally, "It is profitable for us." ¶ *That one man should die.* Jesus they regarded as promoting sedition, and as exposing the nation, if he was successful, to the vengeance of the Romans. Ver. 48. If he was put to death, they supposed the people would be safe. This is all, doubtless, that he meant by his dying for the people. He did not himself intend to speak of his dying as an atonement or a sacrifice. But his words might also express that; and though he was unconscious of it, he was expressing a real truth. In the sense in which he intended it, there was no truth in the observation, nor occasion for it. But in the sense which his words might convey, there was real and most important truth. It was expedient, it was infinitely desirable, that Jesus should die for that, and for all people, to save them from perishing.

51. *Not of himself.* Though he uttered what proved to be a true prophecy, yet it was accomplished in a way which he did not intend. He had a wicked design. He was plotting murder and crime. Yet, wicked as he was, and little as he intended it, God so ordered it that he delivered a most precious truth respecting the atonement. Remark, 1. God may fulfil the words of the wicked in a manner which

## CHAPTER XI.

## Jerusalem.

that nation only, should gather to- children of God abroad.

that day forth together for to

fore walked no

III. 29. 1 John II. 2-17. 2 Psa. cix 4, 5.

tend. 2. He may e and wicked plots omplishing his pur- gard as the fulfil- God may make the : so as directly to gna, and prostrate ers should tremble ey lay plans against unjustly to others.

that year. It is at Caiaphas was a conscious of the has affixed to his s express the truth of Jesus; and John cable circumstance, f the nation should sentiment which e truth about the at importance was n of the high priest it was by him that im and Thummim in cases of import- Num. xxvii. 21. It able, that the high ed with the gift of ained a high office, ame was great, and ble that he uttered e result showed to : the sense that he asied. He uttered e be prophetic; or, : time a sentiment true. It does not aspired, or that he d among the true ds were such that e event. The word n, here, not in the sense which is not cred writers, as for

more openly <sup>4</sup> among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, <sup>5</sup> and there continued with his disciples.

55 ¶ And <sup>6</sup> the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem

<sup>4</sup> Ch. vii. 1; xviii. 20. <sup>5</sup> 2 Sam. xiii. 23. <sup>6</sup> Ch. ii. 13; v. 1; vi. 4.

instance, in Acts xxi. 9. See Notes on Rom. xii. 6. 1 Cor. xiv. 1. Compare Matt. xxvi. 68; Luke xxii. 64. ¶ *That Jesus should die.* Die in the place of men, or as atonement for sinners. This is evidently the meaning which John attaches to the words. ¶ *For that nation.* For the Jews. As a sacrifice for their sins. In no other sense whatever could it be said that he died for them. His death, so far from saving them in the sense in which the high priest understood it, was the very occasion of their destruction. They invoked the vengeance of God, Matt. xxvii. 25, and all these calamities came upon them because they would not come to him and be saved; that is, because they rejected him and put him to death. Matt. xxiii. 37—39.

52. *Should gather together in one.* All his chosen among the Jews and Gentiles. ¶ *The children of God.* This is spoken not of those who were then Christians, but of all whom God would bring to him. All who would be, in the mercy of God, called, chosen, sanctified, among all nations. Ch. x. 16.

53. *They took counsel.* The judgment of the high priest silenced opposition, and they began to devise measures to put him to death without exciting tumult among the people. Compare Matt. xxvi. 5.

54. *No more openly.* No more publicly, in the cities and towns. Jesus never exposed his life unnecessarily to hazard. But though the time of his death was determined in the counsel of God, yet this did not prevent his using proper means to preserve his life. ¶ *The wilderness.* See Note, Matt. iii. 1. ¶ *A city called Ephraim.* This was probably a small town in the tribe of Ephraim, about five miles west of Jericho.

55. *Jews' passover.* See Note, Matt. xxi.

before the passover, to purify themselves.

56 Then <sup>1</sup> sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

## CHAPTER XII.

*Christ's feet anointed, 1—8. Plot against Lazarus, 9—11. Christ enters Jeru-*

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 8; ch. v. 6, 18.

xxvi. 2—17. Its being called the *Jews'* passover, shows that John wrote this gospel among people who were not Jews, and to whom it was necessary therefore to explain their customs. ¶ *To purify themselves.* This purifying consisted in preparing themselves for the proper observation of the passover, according to the commands of the law. If any were defiled in any manner by contact with the dead, or by any other ceremonial uncleanness, they were required to take the prescribed measures for purification, Lev. xxii. 1—6. For want of this, great inconvenience was sometimes experienced. See 2 Chron. xxx. 17, 18. Different periods were necessary in order to be cleansed from ceremonial pollution. For example, one who had been polluted by the touch of a dead body, of a sepulchre, or by the bones of the dead, was sprinkled on the third and seventh days by a clean person, with hyssop dipped in water mixed in the ashes of the red heifer. After washing his body and clothes, he was then clean. These persons who went up before the passover, were doubtless those who had in some manner been ceremonially polluted.

56. *Will not come to the feast?* They doubted whether he would come. On the one hand, it was required by law that all the males should come. On the other, his coming was attended with great danger. This was the cause of their doubting. It was in this situation that

*salem publicly, 12—19. Greeks wish to see Jesus, 20—22. Christ foretells his death, 23—33. Who are blind, 34—50.*

THEN Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where <sup>2</sup> Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha <sup>3</sup> served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then <sup>4</sup> took Mary a pound of

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 1, 43. Matt. xxi. 17. Mark xi. 11.  
<sup>3</sup> Luke x. 38—42. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xi. 2. Matt. xxvi. 6—13  
Mark xiv. 3—9.

our Saviour, like many of his followers, was called to act. Danger was on the one hand, and duty on the other. He chose, as all should, to do his duty, and leave the event with God. He made this choice though he knew that death was to be the consequence; and we should not fear when we have reason to apprehend danger, persecution, or death, from an honest attempt to observe all the commandments of God.

## CHAPTER XII.

1. *Then Jesus—came to Bethany.* This was near to Jerusalem; and it was from this place that he made his triumphant entry into the city. See Notes on Matt. xxi. 1.

2—8. See this passage explained in the Notes on Matt. xxvi. 3—16.

2. *A supper.* At the house of Simon the leper. Matt. xxvi. 6. ¶ *Lazarus was, &c.* The names of Martha and Lazarus are mentioned because it was not in their own house, but in that of Simon. Lazarus is particularly mentioned, since it was so remarkable that one who had been once dead should be enjoying again the endearments of friendship. This shows also that his resurrection was no illusion, that he was really restored to the blessings of life and friendship. Calmet thinks this was about two months after his resurrection; and it is the last that we hear of him. How long he lived is unknown. Nor is it recorded that he made any con-

ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair : and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor ?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor ; but because he was a thief, <sup>1</sup> and had <sup>2</sup> the bag, and bare what was put therein.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kin. v. 20—27. Psa. l. 18. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xiii. 28.

munication about the world of spirits. It is remarkable that none who have been restored to life from the dead, have made any communications respecting that world. See Luke xvi. 31, and Notes on 2 Cor. xii. 4.

4. *Which should betray him.* Greek, Who was to betray him; that is, who would do it.

5. *Three hundred pence.* About £8 10s. ¶ *And given to the poor.* The avails or value of it given to the poor.

6. *Had the bag.* The word translated *bag* is compounded of two words, meaning tongue, and to keep, or preserve. It was used to denote the bag in which musicians used to keep the tongues, or reeds of their pipes when travelling. Hence it came to mean any bag or purse in which travellers put their money, or their most precious articles. The disciples appear to have had such a bag or purse in common, in which they put whatever money they had, and which was designed especially for the poor. Matt. xxvii. 55. Luke viii. 3. Acts ii. 44. The keeping of this, it seems, was entrusted to Judas. And it is remarkable that the only one among them that seems to have been naturally avaricious, should have received this appointment. It shows us that every man is tried according to his native propensity. This is the object of trial, to bring out man's native character. And every man will find opportunity to do evil according to his native disposition,

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone : against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For <sup>3</sup> the poor always ye have with you ; but me <sup>4</sup> ye have not always.

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there : and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 ¶ But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also <sup>5</sup> to death ;

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xv. 11. Matt. xxvi. 11. Mark xiv. 7. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 35 ; ch. viii. 21 ; xiii. 33 ; xvi. 5-7. Cant. v. 6. <sup>5</sup> Luke xvi. 31.

if he is inclined to it. ¶ *And bare, &c.* The word translated *bare* means literally to carry as a burden. Then it means to carry away, as in ch. xx. 15. Hence it means to carry away as a thief does ; and this is evidently its meaning here. It has this sense often in classic writers. Judas was a thief, and stole what was put into the bag. This money he desired to be entrusted to him, that he might secretly enrich himself. It is clear, however, that the disciples did not at this time know that this was his character, or they would have remonstrated against him. They learned it afterwards. We may learn here, 1. That it is not a new thing for members of the church to be covetous. Judas was so before them. 2. That such members will be those who complain of the great waste in spreading the gospel. 3. That this deadly, mean, and grovelling passion will work all evil in a church. It brought down the curse of God on the children of Israel, in the case of Achan, Josh. vii. ; and it betrayed our Lord to death. It has often since brought blighting on the church, and many a time betrayed the cause of Christ, and drowned men in destruction and perdition. 1 Tim. vi. 9.

10. *That they might put Lazarus to death.* When men are determined not to believe the gospel, there is no end to the crimes to which they are driven. Lazarus was alive ; and the evidence of his resurrection was so clear that they could not

11 Because that <sup>1</sup> by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

12 ¶ On <sup>2</sup> the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, <sup>3</sup> Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon: as it is <sup>4</sup> written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

16 These things <sup>5</sup> understood not his disciples at the first: but when

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 18; ch. xi. 45. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxi. 5—11. Mark xi. 8—10. Luke xix. 36—40. <sup>3</sup> Psal. cxviii. 25, 26. <sup>4</sup> Zech. ix. 9. <sup>5</sup> Luke xviii. 34.

resist it. They could neither deny it, nor prevent its effect on the people. As it was determined to kill Jesus, so they consulted about the propriety of removing Lazarus first, that the number of his followers might be lessened, and that the death of Jesus might make less commotion. Unbelief stops at no crime. Lazarus was innocent. They could bring no charge against him. But they deliberately plotted murder rather than believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

12—19. See this passage explained in the Notes on Matt. xxi. 1—16.

16. *Was glorified.* Was raised from the dead, and had ascended to heaven.

17. *Bare record.* Testified that he had raised him, and, as was natural, spread the report through the city. This excited much attention, and they came out in multitudes to meet one who had power to work such miracles.

19. *Prevail nothing.* All your efforts are ineffectual to stop the progress of his opinions, and to prevent the people from believing on him. ¶ *The world.* As we should say, "Every body; all the city has gone out." The fact that Jesus met with such success induced them to hasten their design of putting him to death. Ch. xi. 53.

Jesus was glorified, <sup>6</sup> then remembered <sup>7</sup> they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him.

17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 For <sup>8</sup> this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive <sup>9</sup> ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

20 ¶ And there were certain <sup>10</sup> Greeks among them, that <sup>11</sup> came up to worship at the feast:

21 The same came therefore to Philip, <sup>12</sup> which was of Bethsaida of

<sup>6</sup> Ch. vii. 30. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xiv. 26. <sup>8</sup> Ver. 11. <sup>9</sup> Ch. xi. 47, 48. <sup>10</sup> Acts xvii. 4. Rom. i. 16. <sup>11</sup> 1 Kin. viii. 41, 42. <sup>12</sup> Ch. i. 44.

20. *Certain Greeks.* In the original, "Some Hellenists," the name commonly given to the Greeks. The same name was commonly used by the Jews to denote all the pagan nations, because most of these whom they knew spoke the Greek language. Ch. vii. 35. Rom. i. 16; ii. 9, 10; iii. 9. The Syriac translates this place, "Some of the Gentiles." There are three opinions in regard to these persons. 1. That they were Jews who spoke the Greek language and dwelt in some of the Greek cities. It is known that Jews were scattered in Asia Minor, Greece, Macedonia, Egypt, &c.: in all which places they had synagogues. See Note ch. vii. 35. 2. That they were proselytes from the Greeks. 3. That they were still Gentiles and idolaters, who came to bring offerings to Jehovah to be deposited in the temple. Lightfoot has shown that the surrounding Pagans were accustomed not only to send presents, sacrifices, and offerings to the temple, but that they also frequently attended the great feasts of the Jews. Hence the outer court of the temple was called the court of the Gentiles. Which of these opinions is the correct one, cannot be determined.

21. *Bethsaida in Galilee.* Note, Matt. xi. 21. ¶ *Would see Jesus.* It is pro-

Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 ¶ And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is <sup>1</sup> come, that

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiii. 33; xvii. 1.

able that the word *see* here implies also, a desire to converse with him, or to hear his doctrine about the nature of his kingdom. They had seen, or heard of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and either by curiosity, or a desire to be instructed, they came and interceded with his disciples that they might be permitted to see him. In this there was nothing wrong. Christ made the curiosity of Zaccheus the means of his conversion. Luke xix. 1—9. If we wish to find the Saviour, we must seek for him, and take the proper means.

22. *Telleth Andrew.* Why he did not at once tell Jesus, is not known. Possibly he was doubtful whether Jesus would wish to converse with Gentiles, and chose to consult with Andrew about it. ¶ *Tell Jesus.* Whether the Greeks were with them cannot be determined. From the following discourse it would seem probable that they were. Or at least, that Jesus admitted them to his presence, and declared the discourse to them.

23. *The hour is come.* The time is come. The word *hour* literally means a twelfth part of the day. But it also is used to denote a brief period, and a fixed, definite, determined time. It is used in this sense here. The appointed, fixed time is come, that is, is so near at hand, that it may be said to be come. ¶ *The Son of man.* This is the favourite title which Jesus gives to himself, denoting his union with man, and the interest he felt in his welfare. The title is used here rather than “the Son of God,” because as a man he had been humble, poor, and despised, but the time had come when, as a man, he was to receive the appropriate honours of the Messiah. ¶ *Be glorified.* Be honoured in an appropriate way. That is, by the testimony which God would give to him at his death, by his resurrection, and by his ascension to glory. See ch. vii. 39.

the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>2</sup> Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 36.

24. *Verily, verily.* An expression denoting the great importance of what he was about to say. We cannot but admire the wisdom by which Jesus introduces the subject of his death. The disciples had seen his triumph. They supposed he was about to establish his kingdom. He told them that the time had come in which he was to be glorified, but not in the manner in which they expected. It was to be by his death. But as they would not at once see how this could be, as it would appear to dash their hopes, he takes occasion to illustrate it by a beautiful comparison. All the beauty and richness of the harvest results from the fact that the grain had died. If it had not died it would never have germinated, or produced the glory of the yellow harvest. So with him. By this he still keeps before them the truth that he was to be glorified, but he delicately and beautifully introduces the idea still that he must die. ¶ *A corn.* A grain. ¶ *Of wheat.* Any kind of grain, wheat, barley, &c. The word includes all grain of this kind. ¶ *Into the ground.* Be buried in the earth so as to be accessible by the proper moisture. ¶ *And die.* The whole body, or substance of the grain, except the germ, dies in the earth, or is decomposed, and this decomposed substance constitutes the first nourishment of the tender germ, a nutriment wonderfully adapted to it, and fitted to nourish it until it becomes vigorous enough to derive its support entirely from the ground. In this God has shown his wisdom and goodness. No one thing could be more evidently fitted for another than this provision made in the grain itself for the future wants of the tender germ. ¶ *Abideth alone.* Produces no fruit. It remains without producing the rich and beautiful harvest. So Jesus intimates that it was only by his death that he would be glorified in the salvation of men, and in the





heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: <sup>1</sup>others said, An angel spake to him.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xix. 16. Job xxxvii. 2-5. Esek. x. 5. Rev. vi. 1.

this: "I am willing to bear any trials. I will not shrink from any sufferings. Let thy name be honoured; let thy character, wisdom, goodness, and plans of mercy be manifested, and promoted, whatever sufferings it may cost me." Thus Jesus showed us that God's glory is to be the great end of our conduct, and that we are to seek that, whatever sufferings it may cost us. ¶ *I have both glorified it.* The word it is not here in the original. But it is not improperly supplied by the translators. There can be no doubt that when God says here that he had glorified his name, he refers to what had been done by Christ, and that this was to be understood as an attestation that he attended him, and approved his work. See ver. 30. He had honoured his name by the pure instructions which he had given to man through him, by his power displayed in miracles, by his proclaiming his mercy through him, by his appointing him to be the Messiah, &c. ¶ *Will glorify it again.* By the death, the resurrection, and ascension of his Son; and by extending the blessings of the gospel among all nations. It was thus that he sustained his Son in view of approaching trials. And we may learn, 1. That God will minister grace to us in the prospect of suffering. 2. That the fact that God will be honoured by our afflictions should make us willing to bear them. 3. That whatever was done by Christ tended to honour the name of God. This was what he had in view. He lived, and suffered not for himself, but to glorify God in the salvation of men.

29. *The people.* A part of the people. ¶ *It thundered.* The unexpected sound of the voice would confound and amaze them. And though there is no reason to doubt that the words were spoken distinctly, Matt. iii. 17, yet some of the people, either from amazement or envy, would suppose this was a mere natural phenomenon. ¶ *An angel spake.* It was the opinion of many of the Jews

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but <sup>2</sup> for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall <sup>3</sup> the prince of this world be cast out.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 42. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 11. Luke x. 18. Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. ii. 2.

that God did not speak to men except by the ministry of angels. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2.

30. *Not because of me.* Not to strengthen or confirm me; not that I had any doubts about my course, or any apprehension that God would not approve me and glorify his name. ¶ *For your sakes.* To give you a striking and indubitable proof that I am the Messiah; that you may remember it when I am departed, and be yourselves comforted, supported, and saved.

31. *Now is the judgment of this world.* Greek, *Crisis.* This expression doubtless has reference to his approaching death; and whatever he means by *judgment* here relates to something that was to be accomplished by that death. It cannot mean that then was to be the time in which the world was to be finally judged, for he says that he did not come then to judge the world, ch. viii. 15; xii. 47.; and he has clearly declared that there shall be a future day when he will judge all mankind. The meaning of it may be thus expressed: "Now is approaching the decisive scene, the eventful period, the crisis, when it shall be determined who shall rule this world. There has been a long conflict between the powers of light and darkness, between God and the devil. Satan has so effectually ruled, that he may be said to be the prince of this world. But my approaching death will destroy his kingdom, will break down his power, and will be the means of setting up the kingdom of God over man." The death of Christ was to be the most grand and effectual means that could be used to establish the authority of the law and government of God. Rom. viii. 3, 4. This it did, by showing the regard God had to his law; by showing his hatred of sin, and presenting the strongest motives to induce man to leave the service of Satan; by securing the influence of the Holy Spirit; and by his putting forth his

32 And I, if I be lifted <sup>1</sup> up from the earth, will draw all <sup>2</sup> men unto me.

33 This he said, signifying <sup>3</sup> what death he should die.

34 The people answered him, We have heard <sup>4</sup> out of the <sup>5</sup> law

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 28. <sup>2</sup> Rom. v. 18. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xviii. 32. <sup>4</sup> Psa. lxxxix. 36, 37; ex. 4; Isa. ix. 7. <sup>5</sup> Rom. v. 18.

own direct power in the cause of virtue and of God. The death of Jesus was the determining cause, the grand crisis, the concentration of all that God had ever done, or ever will do, to break down the kingdom of Satan, and set up his power over man. Thus was fulfilled the prediction in Gen. iii. 15. ¶ *Now shall the prince of this world.* Satan, or the devil. Chap. xiv. 30; xvi. 11. He is also called the "god of this world." 2 Cor. iv. 4. Eph. vi. 12. "The rulers of the darkness of this world," i. e. the rulers of this dark world—a well-known Hebraism. He is also called "the prince of the power of the air." Eph. ii. 2. All these names are given him from the influence or power which he has over the men of this world, because the great mass of men have been under his control, and subject to his will. ¶ *He cast out.* His kingdom shall be destroyed. His empire shall come to an end. It does not mean that then his reign over all men should entirely cease, but that then would be the crisis, the grand conflict, in which he should be vanquished, and from that time his kingdom begin to decline, until it should finally cease, and then be free altogether from his dominion. See Luke x. 18. Acts xxvi. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. Col. i. 18—20. Rev. xx. 14.

32. *Be lifted up.* See ch. iii. 14; viii. 28. ¶ *Will draw.* Ch. vi. 44. The same word is used in both places. ¶ *All men.* I will incline all kinds of men; or will make the way open by the cross, so that all men may come. I will provide a way which shall present a strong motive or inducement, the strongest that can be presented to all men to come to me.

34. *Out of the law.* Out of the Old Testament; or rather we have been so taught by those who have interpreted the law to us. ¶ *That Christ.* That the

that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light <sup>6</sup> with you. <sup>7</sup> Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you:

<sup>6</sup> Ch. viii. 12. Jer. xlii. 16.

Messiah. ¶ *Abideth for ever.* Will remain for ever, or will live for ever. The doctrine of many of them certainly was that the Messiah would not die: that he would reign as a prince for ever over the people. This opinion was founded on such passages of scripture as these, Psa. cx. 4. Dan. ii. 44; vii. 13, 14. In the interpretation of these passages they had overlooked such places as Isa. liii. Nor did they understand how the fact, he should reign for ever, could be reconciled with the idea of his death. To us, who understand that his reign does not refer to a temporal, an earthly kingdom, it is easy. ¶ *How sayest thou, &c.* We have understood by the Son of man, the same as the Messiah, and that he is to reign for ever. How can he be put to death! ¶ *Who is this Son of man?* "The Son of man we understand to be the Messiah spoken of by Daniel, who is to reign for ever. To him, therefore, you cannot refer when you say that he must be lifted up, or must die. Who is it—what other Son of man is referred to but the Messiah!" Either ignorantly, or wilfully, they supposed he referred to some one else than the Messiah.

35. *The light with you.* Jesus did not reply directly to their question. He saw that they were offended by the mention of his death, and he endeavoured to arrive at the same thing indirectly. He tells them, therefore, that the light would be with them a little while, and that they ought to improve the opportunity while they had it, to listen to his instructions, to inquire with candour, and thus to forsake their false notions respecting the Messiah. ¶ *The light.* Ch. i. 4. It is probable that they understood this as denoting the Messiah. See ch. viii. 12; ix. 4. ¶ *Walk, &c.* Ch. xi. 9. Whatever you have to do, do it while you enjoy this light. Make good use of your

for he <sup>1</sup> that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be <sup>2</sup> the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, <sup>3</sup> and did hide himself from them.

37 ¶ But though he had done

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 10. <sup>2</sup> Eph. v. 8. <sup>3</sup> Ch. viii. 59; x. 39, 40; xi. 54. Matt. xxi. 17.

privileges before they are removed. That is, while the Messiah is with you, avail yourselves of your instructions, and learn the way to life. ¶ *Lest darkness.* Lest God should take away all your mercies; remove all light and instruction from you, and leave you to ignorance, blindness, and woe. This was true that darkness and calamity were to come upon the Jewish people when the Messiah was removed; and it is also true that God leaves a sinner to darkness and misery when he has long rejected the gospel. ¶ *For he, &c.* See ch. xi. 10.

36. *While ye have light.* This implied two things, 1. That he was the light, or was the Messiah. 2. That he was soon to be taken away by death. In this manner he answered their question not directly, but in a way to convey the truth to their minds, and at the same time to administer to them useful admonition. Jesus never aroused the prejudices of men unnecessarily, yet he never shrank from declaring to them the truth in some way, however unpalatable it might be. ¶ *Believe in the light.* That is, in the Messiah, who is the light of the world. ¶ *That ye may be children, &c.* That ye may be the friends and followers of the Messiah. Note, Matt. i. 1. See ch. viii. 12. Eph. v. 8. ¶ *Did hide himself from them.* Ch. viii. 59. He went out to Bethany, where he commonly passed the night. Luke xxi. 37.

37. *So many miracles.* This does not refer to any miracles wrought on this occasion, but to all his miracles wrought in view of the nation, in healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, raising the dead, &c. John here gives the summary or the result of all his works. Though Jesus had given the most undeniable proof of his being the Messiah, yet the nation did not believe on him. ¶ *Before them.* Before the Jewish nation. Not in the

so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him :

38 That <sup>4</sup> the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, <sup>5</sup> Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xv. 25; xvii. 12; xix. 24, 26, 27. <sup>5</sup> Isa. liii. 1. Rom. x. 16.

presence of the people whom he was then addressing, but before the Jewish people. ¶ *They believed not.* The Jewish nation did not believe as a nation, but rejected him.

38. *The saying.* The word of Isaiah, or that which Isaiah predicted. This occurs in Isa. liii. 1. ¶ *Might be fulfilled.* That the same effect should occur as did in the time of Isaiah. This does not mean that the Pharisees rejected Christ in order that the prophecy of Isaiah should be fulfilled, but that by their rejection of him the same thing had occurred which took place in the time of Isaiah. His message was despised by the nation, and he himself put to death. And it was also true, by the same causes, by the same nation, that the same gospel message was rejected by the Jews in the time of Christ. The same language of the prophet would express both events, and no doubt was intended by the Holy Spirit, to mark both events. In this way it was completely fulfilled. See Notes on Isa. liii. 1. ¶ *Our report.* Literally, by report is meant what is heard. Our speech, our message. That is, few or none have received the message. The form of the question is an emphatic way of saying that it was rejected. ¶ *The arm of the Lord.* The arm is a symbol of power, as it is the instrument by which we execute our purposes. It is put for the power or God. Isa. li. 9; lii. 10. Thus he is said to have brought out the children of Israel from Egypt, with a high arm; that is, with great power. It hence means God's power in defending his people, in overcoming his enemies, and in saving the soul. In this place, it clearly denotes the power displayed by the miracles of Christ. ¶ *Revealed.* Made known, seen, understood. Though the power of God was displayed, yet the people did not see and understand it.

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias <sup>1</sup> said again,

40 He hath blinded their <sup>2</sup> eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor

<sup>1</sup> Isa. vi. 9, 10. <sup>2</sup> Ch. ix. 39. Isa. xxix. 10. Ezek. xiv. 9.

39. *They could not.* See Mark vi. 5. The words *can* and *could* are often used in the bible to denote the existence of such obstacles as to make a result certain, or to affirm that while one thing exists, another thing cannot follow. Thus, ch. v. 44, "How can ye believe who receive honour one of another." That is, while this propensity to seek for honour exists, it will effectually prevent your believing. Thus, Gen. xxxvii. 4, the brethren of Joseph "could not speak peaceably with him." That is, while their hatred continued so strong, the other result would follow. See also ch. vi. 60. Amos iii. 3. Matt. xii. 34. Rom. viii. 7. In this case, it means that there was some obstacle or difficulty that made it certain that while it existed, they would not believe. What that was, is stated in the next verse, and while that blindness of mind, and that hardness of heart existed, it was impossible that they should believe, for the two things were incompatible. But this determines nothing about their power of removing that blindness, or of yielding their heart to the gospel. It simply affirms that while one exists the other cannot follow. Chrysostom and Augustine understand this of a moral inability, and not of any natural want of power. "They could not, because they would not." Chrysostom, *in loco*. So on Jer. xiii. 23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin," &c., he says, "he does not say it is impossible for a wicked man to do well, but because they will not, therefore they cannot." Augustine says on this place, "If I be asked why they could not believe? I answer without hesitation, because they would not: because God foresaw their evil will, and he announced it beforehand by the prophet. ¶ *Said again.* Isa. vi. 9, 10.

40. *He hath blinded their eyes.* The expression in Isaiah is, "Go, make the heart of this people fat, and shut their eyes." That is, go and proclaim truth to them,

understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 These things said Esaias, when <sup>3</sup> he saw his glory, and spake of him. <sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Isa. vi. 1, 5. <sup>4</sup> Ch. v. 39. Acts x. 43. 1 Pet. i. 11. Rev. xix. 10.

truth that will result in blinding their eyes. Go and proclaim the law and the will of God, and the effect will be, owing to the hardness of their heart, that their eyes will be blinded, and their hearts hardened. As God knew that this would be the result, as it was to be the effect of the message, his commanding Isaiah to go and proclaim it, was the same in effect, or in the result, as if he had commanded him to blind their eyes, and harden their hearts. It is this effect or result to which the evangelist refers in this place. He states that God did it; that is, he did it in the manner mentioned in Isaiah, for we are limited to that in our interpretation of the passage. In that case it is clear that the mode specified is not a direct agency on the part of God in blinding the mind, which we cannot reconcile with any just notions of the divine character, but in suffering the truth to produce a regular effect on sinful minds, without putting forth any positive supernatural influence to prevent it. The effect of truth on such minds is to irritate, to enrage, and to harden, unless counteracted by the grace of God. See Rom. vii. 8, 9, 11. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. And as God knew this, and knowing it, still sent the message, and suffered it to produce the regular effect, the evangelist says, "He hath blinded their minds," thus retaining the substance of the passage in Isaiah, without quoting the precise language. But in proclaiming the truth there was nothing wrong on the part of God or of Isaiah; nor is there any indication that God was unwilling that they should believe and be saved. ¶ *That they should not see*, &c. This does not mean that it was the design of God that they should not be converted, but that it was the effect of their rejecting the message. See Note on Matt. xiii. 14, 15.

41. *When he saw his glory.* Isa. vi. 1—10. Isaiah saw the Lord, in Heaven, Jehovah, sitting on a throne, and

42 ¶ Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but <sup>1</sup> because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

43 For <sup>2</sup> they loved the praise

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 22. <sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 44. Rom. ii. 29.

surrounded with the seraphim. This is, perhaps, the only instance in the bible in which Jehovah is said to have been seen by man; and for this, the Jews affirm that Isaiah was put to death. God had said, Exod. xxxiii. 20, "No man shall see me and live," and as Isaiah affirmed that he had seen Jehovah, the Jews, for that and other reasons, put him to death by sawing him asunder. See Introduction to Isaiah, § 2. In the prophecy, Isaiah is said expressly to have seen Jehovah. Isa. vi. 1, 5. By his glory is meant the manifestation of him, the shechinah, or visible cloud, that was a representation of God, and that rested over the mercy-seat. This was regarded as equivalent to seeing God; and John here expressly applies this to the Lord Jesus Christ. For he is not affirming that the people did not believe in God, but is assigning the reason why they believed not on Jesus Christ as the Messiah. The whole discourse and illustration have respect to the Lord Jesus, and the natural construction of the passage requires us to refer it to him. John affirms that it was the glory of the Messiah that Isaiah saw, and yet Isaiah affirms that it was Jehovah. And, from this, the inference is irresistible that John regarded Jesus as the Jehovah, whom Isaiah saw. The name Jehovah is never in the scriptures applied to a man, or an angel, or to any creature. It is the peculiar, incommunicable name of God. So great was the reverence of the Jews for that name, that they would not even pronounce it. This passage is, therefore, conclusive proof that Christ is equal with the Father. ¶ *Spake of him.* Of the Messiah. The connexion requires this interpretation.

42. *The chief rulers.* Some of the members of the sanhedrim. ¶ *Because of the Pharisees.* The Pharisees were a majority of the council. ¶ *Put out of the synagogue.* Excommunicated. See Note, ch. ix. 22.

43. *The praise of men.* The approba-

tion of men more than the praise of God.

44 ¶ Jesus cried and said, He <sup>3</sup> that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

<sup>3</sup> Mark ix. 37. 1 Pet. i. 21.

tion of men. It does not appear that they had a living, active faith, but that they were convinced in their understanding that he was the Messiah. They had that kind of faith which is so common among men; a speculative acknowledgment that religion is true, but an acknowledgment which leads to no self-denial, which shrinks from the active duties of piety, and fears man more than God. True faith is active. It overcomes the fear of man. It prompts to self-denying duties. Heb. xi. Nevertheless, it was no unimportant proof that Jesus was the Messiah, that any part of the great council of the Jews were even speculatively convinced of it. And it shows that the evidences could not have been alight when it overcame their prejudices and pride, and constrained them to admit that the lowly and poor man of Nazareth was the long expected Messiah of their nation. ¶ *Did not confess him.* Did not openly avow their belief that he was the Messiah. Two of them, however, did afterwards evince their attachment to him. These were Joseph and Nicodemus. Ch. xix. 38, 39. That Joseph was one of them appears from Mark xv. 43. Luke xxiii. 50, 51.

44. *Jesus cried and said.* John does not say where or when this was. It is probable, however, that it was a continuation of the discourse recorded in ver. 30—36. Jesus saw their unbelief, and proceeded to state the consequence of believing on him, and of rejecting him and his message. ¶ *Believeth not on me.* That is, not on me alone, or his faith does not terminate on me. Compare Matt. x. 20. Mark ix. 37. It involves also belief in him that sent me. Jesus uniformly represents the union between himself and God as so intimate, that there could not be faith in him unless there was also faith in God. He did the same works, ch. v. 17, 20, 36; x. 25, 37; and taught the very doctrine which God had commissioned

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

46 I <sup>1</sup> am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came <sup>2</sup> not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, <sup>3</sup> hath one that judgeth him: the word that I

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 5; iii. 19.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. iii. 17.    <sup>3</sup> Deut. xviii. 19.    Luke ix. 26.

him to teach. Ch. v. 20—23, 30; viii. 38.

45. *Seeth me, &c.* This verse is a strong confirmation of his equality with God. In no other way can it be true that he who saw Jesus saw him that sent him, unless he were the same in essence. Of no man could it be affirmed that he who saw him saw God. To say this of Paul or Isaiah would have been blasphemy. And yet Jesus used this language familiarly and constantly. It shows that he had a consciousness that he was divine, and that it was the natural and proper way of speaking when speaking of himself. Compare ch. v. 17.

46. *A light into the world.* Ch. i. 9; iii. 19; viii. 12. ¶ *Walk in darkness.* In gross and dangerous errors. Darkness is put for error as well as for sin. Ch. iii. 19. 1 John i. 5. It is also used to denote the state when the comforts of religion are withdrawn from the soul. Ch. viii. 12. Isa. viii. 22; lix. 9. Joel ii. 2.

47. *I judge him not, &c.* Ch. viii. 15. This was not his present purpose to condemn men. He would come to condemn the guilty at a future time. At present he came to save them. Hence he did not now even pronounce decisively on the condition of those who rejected him, but still gave them an opportunity to be saved.

48. *He that rejecteth me.* Luke x. 16. The word *reject* means to despise, or to refuse to receive him. ¶ *Hath one.* That is, he needs not my voice to condemn him. He will carry his own condemnation with him, even should I be silent. His own conscience will condemn him. His words which I have spoken will be

have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment <sup>4</sup> is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

<sup>4</sup> 1 John iii. 23.

remembered, and will condemn him, if there were nothing further. From this we learn: 1. That a guilty conscience needs no accuser. 2. That the words of Christ, and the messages of mercy which the sinner has rejected, will be remembered by him. 3. That this will be the source of his condemnation. This will make him miserable; and there will be no possibility of his being happy. 4. That the conscience of the sinner will concur with the sentence of Christ in the great day, and that he will go to eternity self-condemned. It is this which will make the pains of hell so intolerable to the sinner. 5. The word that Christ has spoken, the doctrines of his gospel, and the messages of mercy, will be that by which the sinner will be judged in the last day. Every man will be judged by that message, and the sinner will be punished according to the frequency and clearness with which the rejected message has been presented to his mind. Matt. xii. 41.

49. *Of myself.* Ch. vii. 16—18.

50. *Is life everlasting.* Is the cause or source of everlasting life. He that obeys the commandment of God shall obtain everlasting life; and this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his only-begotten Son. 1 John iii. 22, 23. We see here the reason of the earnestness and fidelity of the Lord Jesus. It was because he saw that eternal life depended on the faithful preaching of the message of God. He therefore proclaimed it in the face of all opposition, contempt, and persecution. And we see also: 1. That every minister of religion

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Jesus washing his disciples' feet, 1—11.*

*His example to be followed, 12—17.*

*The treason of Judas foretold, 18*

*—30. Mutual love taught, 31—35.*

*Peter forewarned, 36—38.*

**N**OW<sup>1</sup> before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour<sup>2</sup> was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having<sup>3</sup> loved his

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 2—17. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xvii. 1, 11.  
<sup>3</sup> Jer. xxxi. 3. Eph. v. 2. 1 John iv. 19. Rev. i. 8.

should have a deep and abiding conviction that he delivers a message that is to be connected with the eternal welfare of his hearers. And, 2. Under the influence of this belief, he should fearlessly deliver his message in the face of bonds, poverty, contempt, persecution, and death.

It may not be improper to remark here that this is the close of the public preaching of Christ. The rest of his ministry was employed in the private instruction of his apostles, and in preparing them for his approaching death. It is such a close as all his ministers should desire to make: a solemn, deliberate, firm exhibition of the truth of God, under a belief that on it was depending the eternal salvation of his hearers, an uttering without fear of the solemn message of the Most High to a lost world.

## CHAPTER XIII.

1. *The feast of the passover.* Note, Matt. xxvi. 2, 17. ¶ *His hour was come.* The hour appointed in the purpose of God for him to die. Ch. xii. 27. ¶ *Having loved his own.* Having given to them decisive and constant proofs of his love. This was done by his calling them to follow him, by patiently teaching them, by bearing with their errors and weaknesses, and by making them the heralds of his truth, and the heirs of eternal life. ¶ *He loved them unto the end.* That is, he continued the proofs of his love until he was taken away from them by death. Instances of that love John proceeds immediately to record in his washing their feet, and in the institution of the supper. We may remark that Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He does not change, he always loves the same

own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil<sup>4</sup> having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

3 Jesus knowing<sup>5</sup> that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that<sup>6</sup> he was come from God, and went to God;

<sup>4</sup> Ch. vi. 70. Luke xxii. 53. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18. Heb. ii. 8. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xvii. 11.

traits of character, nor does he withdraw his love from the soul. If his people walk in darkness, and wander from him, the fault is theirs, not his. His is the character of a friend that never leaves or forsakes us, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Psa. xxxvii. 28. Prov. xviii. 24. Isa. xlix. 14—17.

2. *Supper being ended.* This translation expresses too much. The original means while they were at supper. And that this is the meaning is clear from the fact that we find them still eating after this. The Arabic and Persic translations give it this meaning. The Latin vulgate renders it like the English. ¶ *The devil.* The leader or prince of evil spirits. ¶ *Having now put it into the heart.* Literally, having cast it into the heart. Compare Luke xxii. 3; Acts v. 3; Eph. vi. 16. The meaning of this passage is, that Satan inclined the mind of Judas to do this, or he tempted him to betray his Master. We know not precisely how this was done; but we know that it was by means of his avarice. Satan could tempt no one unless there was some inclination of the mind, some natural or depraved propensity, that he could make use of. He presents objects in alluring forms fitted to that propensity, and under the influence of a strong, corrupt inclination the soul yields to sin. In the case of Judas it was the love of money: and it was necessary then to present to him only the possibility of obtaining money, and it found him ready for any crime.

3. *Jesus knowing, &c.* With the full understanding of his dignity, and elevation of character, he yet condescended to wash their feet. The evangelist introduces his washing their feet by saying,



4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Pe-

ter: and <sup>1</sup> Peter said unto him, Lord, dost <sup>2</sup> thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus

<sup>1</sup> *He.* <sup>2</sup> *Ch. i. 27. Matt. xiii. 31—34. Luke v. 8.*

that he was fully conscious of his elevation above them, as being entrusted with all things; and this made his humiliation the more striking and remarkable. Had he been a mere human teacher, or a prophet, it would have been remarkable. But when we remember the dignity of his nature, it shows how low he would stoop to teach and save his people. ¶ *Had given all things, &c.* See Note, Matt. xxviii. 18. ¶ *Was come from God.* See Note, ch. viii. 42. ¶ *Went to God.* Was about to return to heaven. See ch. vi. 61, 62.

4. *He riseth from supper.* Evidently while they were eating. See ver. 2. ¶ *Laid aside his garments.* His outer garment. Note, Matt. v. 38—41. This was his mantle or robe, which is said to have been without seam. It was customary to lay this aside when they worked, or ran, or in the heat of summer. ¶ *Took a towel, and girded himself.* This was the manner of a servant or slave. See Note, Luke xii. 37; xvii. 8.

5. *Began to wash, &c.* It was uniformly the office of a servant to wash the feet of guests. 1 Sam. xxv. 41. It became a matter of necessity where they travelled without shoes, and where they reclined on couches at meals. It should be remembered here, that the disciples were not sitting at the table as we do, but were lying with their feet extended from the table, so that Jesus could easily have access to them. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6.

6. *Dost thou wash my feet?* Every word here is emphatic. *Dost thou*, the Son of God, the Messiah, perform the humble office of a servant, towards me, a sinner? This was an expression of Peter's humility, of his reverence for Jesus, and also a refusal to allow him to do it. It is possible, though not certain from the text, that he came to Simon Peter first.

7. *Thou knowest not now.* Though he

saw the action of Jesus, yet he did not fully understand the design of it. It was a symbolical action, inculcating a lesson of humility, and intended to teach it to them in such a manner that it should be impossible for them ever to forget it. Had he simply commanded them to be humble, it would have been far less forcible and impressive than when they saw him actually performing the office of a servant. ¶ *Shalt know hereafter.* Jesus at that time partially explained it. Ver. 14, 15. But he was teaching them by this expressive act a lesson which they would continue to learn all their lives. Every day they would see more and more the necessity of humility, and of kindness to each other; and would see that they were the servants of Christ and of the church, and ought not to aspire to honours and offices, but to be willing to perform the humblest service to benefit the world. And we may remark here that God often does things which we do not fully understand now, but which we may hereafter. He often afflicts us, he disappoints us, he frustrates our plans. Why it is, we do not know now, but we yet shall learn that it was for our good, and designed to teach us some important lesson of humility and piety. So he will, in heaven, scatter all doubts, remove all difficulties, and show us the reason of the whole of his mysterious dealings in his leading us in the way to our future rest. We ought also, in view of this, to submit ourselves to him, to hush every murmur, and to believe that he does all things well. It is one evidence of piety when we are willing to receive affliction at the hand of God, the reason of which we cannot see, content with the belief that we may see it hereafter; or even if we never do, still having so much confidence in God as to believe that what he does is right.

8. *Thou shalt never wash my feet.*

answered him, If <sup>1</sup> I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. v. 26. Tit. iii. 5.

This was a decided and firm expression of his reverence for his Master. And yet it was improper. Jesus had just declared that it had a meaning, and that he ought to submit to it. We should yield to all the plain and positive requirements of God, even if we cannot now see how obedience would promote his glory. ¶ *If I wash thee not.* This had immediate reference to the act of washing his feet. And it denotes that if Peter had not so much confidence in him as to believe that an act which he performed was proper, though he could not see its propriety; if he was not willing to submit his will to that of Christ, and implicitly obey him, he had no evidence of piety. As Christ, however, was accustomed to pass from temporal and sensible objects to those which were spiritual, and to draw instruction from whatever was before him, some have supposed that he here took occasion to state to Peter that if his soul was not made pure by him, he could not be his follower. Washing is often thus put as an emblem of moral purification. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Tit. iii. 5, 6. This is the meaning also of baptism. If this was the sense in which Jesus used these words, it denotes that unless Christ should change and purify Peter, he could have no evidence that he was his disciple. "Unless by my doctrine and Spirit I shall purify you, and remove your pride, your want of constant watchfulness, your anger, your timidity and fear, you can have no part in me." Matt. xxvi. 33, 40, 51, 70, 74.—Grotius. ¶ *Hast no part with me.* Nothing in common with me. No evidence of possessing my spirit, of being interested in my work, and no participation in my glory.

9. *Not my feet only, &c.* Peter, with characteristic readiness and ardour, saw now that every thing depended on this. His whole salvation, his attachment to his Master was involved. If to refuse to have his feet washed was to be regarded as evidence that he had no part with

10 Jesus saith to him, <sup>2</sup> He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xvi. 26—28; xvii. 15, 16. Num. xix. 7, 8, 12, 13, 19—21.

Jesus, he was not only willing but desirous that it should be done; not only anxious that his feet should be cleansed, but his hands and his head, that is entirely, thoroughly. Perhaps he saw the spiritual meaning of the Saviour, and expressed his ardent wish that his whole soul should be made pure by the work of Christ. A true Christian is desirous of being cleansed from all sin. He has no reserve. He wishes not merely that one evil propensity should be removed, but all. 2 Cor. x. 5. 1 Thess. v. 23. His intellect, his will, his affections, his fancy, memory, judgment, he desires should be all brought under the entire influence of the gospel, and every power of the body and mind be consecrated unto God.

10. *He that is washed.* This is a difficult passage, and interpreters have been divided about its meaning. Some have supposed that it was customary to bathe before eating the paschal supper, and that the apostles did it; Jesus having said, "he that hath bathed his body, is clean except in regard to his feet, to the dirt contracted in returning from the bath, and that there was need only that the feet should be washed, in order to prepare them properly to receive the supper." They suppose, also, that the lesson which Jesus meant to teach was that they were really pure, ch. xv. 3; that they were qualified to partake of the ordinances of religion, and needed only to be purified from occasional blemishes and impurities.—Grotius. Others say that there is not evidence that the Jews bathed before partaking of the paschal supper, but that reference is made to the custom of washing their hands and their face. It is known that this was practised. See Note, Matt. xv. 2. Mark vii. 3, 4. Peter had requested him to wash his hands and his head. Jesus told him that as that had been done, it was unnecessary to repeat it. But to wash the feet was an act of hospitality, the office of a servant, and that all that was needed now was for him

11 For <sup>1</sup> he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye <sup>2</sup> call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 64—71. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xi. 28. Matt. vii. 21, 22; xxiii. 8—10. 1 Cor. viii. 6; xii. 3. Phil. ii. 11.

to show this condescension and humility. Probably reference is had here to internal purity, as Jesus was fond of drawing illustrations from every quarter to teach them spiritual doctrine; as if he had said: "You are clean by my word and ministry, ch. xv. 3; you are my followers, and are prepared for the scene before you. But one thing remains. And as when we come to this rite, having washed, there remains no need of washing except to wash the feet, so there is now nothing remaining but for me to show you an example that you will always remember, and that shall complete my public instructions to you." ¶ *Is clean.* This word may apply to the body, or the soul. ¶ *Every whit.* Altogether, wholly. ¶ *Ye are clean.* Here the word has doubtless reference to the mind and heart. ¶ *But not all.* You are not all my true followers, and fitted for the ordinance before us.

11. *Who should betray him.* Greek: "He knew him who was about to betray him."

12. *Know ye what, &c.* Do you know the meaning or design of what I have done unto you.

13. *Ye call me Master.* Teacher. ¶ *And Lord.* This word is applied to one who rules, and is often given to God, as being the proprietor and ruler of all things. It is given to Christ often in the New Testament. ¶ *Ye say well, &c.* Matt. xxiii. 8, 10. ¶ *So I am.* That is, he was their teacher and instructor, and he was their sovereign and king.

14, 15. *Ye—ought to wash, &c.* Some

also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For <sup>3</sup> I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord: neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If <sup>4</sup> ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them.

18 ¶ I speak not of you all; I

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xli. 29. Eph. v. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 21; iii. 17, 18. 1 John ii. 6. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xv. 14. Gen. vi. 22. Psa. xix. 11. Eccl. xxxvi. 37. Matt. vii. 24, 25; xli. 50. Jas. i. 25.

have understood this literally as instituting a religious rite which we ought to observe. But this was evidently not its design; for, 1. There is no evidence that Jesus intended it as a religious observance like the Lord's supper, or the ordinance of baptism. 2. It was not observed by the apostles or the primitive Christians as a religious rite. 3. It was a rite of hospitality among the Jews, a common well-known thing, and performed by servants. 4. It is the manifest design of Jesus here to inculcate a lesson of humility; to teach them by his example that they ought to condescend to the most humble offices for the benefit of others. They ought not to be proud, and vain, and unwilling to occupy a low place, but to regard themselves as the servants of each other, and as willing to befriend each other in every way. And especially as they were to be founders of the church, and to be greatly honoured, he took this occasion of warning them against the dangers of ambition, and of teaching them, by an example that they could not forget, the duty of humility.

16, 17. *The servant is not, &c.* This was universally true, and this they were to remember always, that they were to manifest the same spirit that he did, and that they were to expect the same treatment from the world. See Note, Matt. x. 24, 25.

18. *I speak not of you all.* That is, in addressing you as clean, I do not mean to say that you all possess this character. ¶ *I know whom I have chosen.* He here means evidently to say that he had not

know whom I have chosen : but that the <sup>1</sup> scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

19 Now <sup>2</sup> I tell <sup>3</sup> you before it

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xli. 9.    <sup>2</sup> Or, from henceforth.    <sup>3</sup> Ch. xiv. 29; xvi. 4.

chosen them all, implying that Judas had not been chosen. As however this word is applied to Judas in one place, ch. vi. 70, "have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" it must have a different meaning here from that which it has there. There it evidently refers to the apostleship. Jesus had chosen him to be an apostle, and had treated him as such. Here it refers to purity of heart, and Jesus implies that though Judas had been chosen to the office of apostleship, yet he had not been chosen to purity of heart and life. The remaining eleven had been chosen, and would be saved. It was not, however, the fault of Jesus that Judas was not saved, for he was admitted to the same teaching, the same familiarity, and the same office; but his execrable love of gold gained the ascendancy, and rendered vain all the means used for his conversion. ¶ *But that the scripture, &c.* These things have occurred in order that the prophecies may receive their completion. But it does not mean that Judas was compelled to this course in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, but that this was foretold, and that by this the prophecy did receive a completion. ¶ *The scripture.* This is written in Psa. xli. 9. It is commonly understood of Ahithophel and of the enemies of David, who had been admitted to his friendship, and who had now proved ungrateful to him. ¶ *May be fulfilled.* See Note, Matt. i. 22. It is difficult to tell whether this prophecy had a primary reference to Judas, or whether it be meant that it received a more complete fulfilment in his case than in the time of David. The cases were similar; the same words would describe both events, and there was an exhibition of similar ingratitude and baseness in both cases, so that the same words would fitly describe both events. ¶ *He that eateth bread with me.* To eat with one was a proof of friendship. See Gen. xliii. 32. 2 Sam. ix. 11. Matt. ix. 11. This means

come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you. He <sup>4</sup> that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that

<sup>4</sup> Matt. x. 40.

that Judas had been admitted to all the privileges of friendship, and had partaken of the usual evidences of his Master's affection. It was this which greatly aggravated his offence. It was base ingratitude, as well as murder. ¶ *Hath lifted up his heel.* Suidas says that this figure is taken from those who are running in a race when one attempts to trip the other up, and make him fall. It was a base and ungrateful return for kindness to which the Lord Jesus referred, and it means that he who had been admitted to the intimacies of friendship had ungratefully and maliciously injured him. Some suppose the expression means to lay snares for one; and others, to kick or injure a man after he is cast down. Calvin, on Psa. xli. 9. It is clear that it denotes great injury, and injury aggravated by the fact of professed friendship. It was not merely the common people, the open enemies, the Jewish nation, that did it, but one who had received all the usual proofs of kindness. It was this which greatly aggravated our Saviour's sufferings.

19. *Ye may believe.* They would see by that that he had a knowledge of the heart, and the power of foretelling future events, and must, therefore, have been sent by God. This does not imply that they had no faith before this, but that their faith would be increased and strengthened by it.

20. *He that receiveth, &c.* This sentiment is found in the instructions which Jesus gave to his disciples. Matt. x. 40. Why he repeats it at this time cannot now be known. It is certain that it is not closely connected with the subject of his conversation. Perhaps, however, it was to show how intimately united he, his Father, his apostles, and all who received them were. They who received them received him, and they who received him received God. So he who betrayed him, betrayed, for the same reason, God. Hence Judas, who was about to betray

receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

21 When <sup>1</sup> Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

23 Now there was leaning on

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 21. Mark xiv. 18. Luke xii. 21.

him, was also about to betray the cause of religion in the world, and to betray God and his cause. Every thing pertaining to religion is connected together. A man cannot do dishonour to one of the institutions of religion without injuring all, he cannot dishonour its ministers, or the Saviour, without dishonouring God. And this shows that one prominent ground of the Saviour's solicitude was that his Father might be honoured, and one source of his deep grief at the treason of Judas, was that it would bring injury upon the whole cause of religion in the world.

21. *Troubled in spirit.* See ch. xii. 27. The reason of his trouble here was that Judas, a professed friend, was about to betray him. He doubtless foresaw the deep and dreadful sorrows of his approaching death, and was also deeply affected with the ingratitude and wickedness of a professed friend. Jesus was man, as well as God; and he felt like other men. His human nature shrank from suffering, and his tender sensibilities were affected not less deeply than would be those of other men, by baseness and treason. ¶ *Testified.* He bore witness to the truth; openly declared, what he had before intimated, that one of them would betray him.

22. *Doubting of whom, &c.* The word translated *doubting* denotes that kind of anxiety which a man feels when he is in perplexity, and knows not what to say or do. We should say, they were "at a loss." See Note, Matt. xxvi. 22.

23. *Leaning on Jesus' bosom.* This does not mean that he was at that time actually lying on his bosom, but that he occupied a situation next to him at the

Jesus' bosom one <sup>2</sup> of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore <sup>3</sup> beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shalt give a <sup>4</sup> sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20. <sup>3</sup> Luke i. 22; v. 7. Acts xii. 17. <sup>4</sup> Or, morsel.

table, so that his head naturally fell back on his bosom when he spoke to him. See Note, Matt. xxiii. 6. ¶ *Whom Jesus loved.* This was doubtless John himself. The evangelists are not accustomed to mention their own names when any mark of favour or any good deed is recorded. They did not seek publicity or notoriety. In this case the appellation is more tender and honourable than any mere name. John was admitted to peculiar friendship, perhaps because the natural disposition of our Saviour was more nearly like its amiableness and mildness of John than any of the other disciples.\* The highest honour that can be conferred on any man is to say that Jesus loved him. Yet this is an honour which all may possess, but which none can inherit without his gift, and without loving him. It is an honour which cannot be won by wealth, or learning, by beauty or accomplishments, by rank or earthly honours, but only by the possession of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

25. *He then, lying on Jesus' breast.* This is a different word from the one rendered, ver. 23, *leaning*. It means *lying back*, or *reclining on the bosom*; Jesus. When Peter spake, John had his head back on the bosom of Jesus,\* that he could speak to him privately without being heard by others.

26. *Jesus answered.* That is, he answered John. It does not appear that either Judas, or the other apostles, heard him. ¶ *Shall give a sop.* The word translated *sop* means a morsel, a piece of

\* See a sermon on the love between Jesus and John, in Robert Hall's works, vol. i. p. 107. Editor.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Jerusalem.*

sop, he gave it to <sup>1</sup> Judas the son of Simon.

after the sop Satan <sup>2</sup> enticed him. Then said Jesus

<sup>3</sup> That thou doest, do

as no man at the table what intent he spake this

some of them <sup>4</sup> thought, Judas had the bag, that

<sup>5</sup> Ch. xii. 4-6. <sup>2</sup> Luke viii. 32. <sup>3</sup> Mark vi. 25. <sup>4</sup> Jas. i. 13-15.

anything else eaten, as much as was stowed to take at a mouthful. About to dip it in the sauce used at the passover. The original, is that from which the word baptize. It is that Jesus would dip it into the wine, we do a piece of bread. It is that it was not an unusual thing at the feast to help others in that it does not appear to have attracted the attention of the others as at the table. It was an indication to Judas that he was the betrayer, and a hint which was also probably understood.

the sop. After he had taken the sop, he gave it to Judas, who had just eaten it. By this Judas knew his design, and that he had concealed his plan. He saw that the other disciples would be deceived by it; and, aroused by suspicion with the apprehension that he would receive his reward, or that Jesus would be deceived, he resolved on executing his plan. ¶ *Satan entered into Judas* had before this put it into his mind to betray Jesus, ver. 2, but he did not give him to a more decided purpose. Luke xxii. 3; Acts v. 3. *That thou doest, do quickly.* This indicates that Jesus was acquainted with his design. He did not command him to do it, but he left him to his own choice. He had used means enough to lead him to a holy purpose, but he brought him to a decision, gave him to understand that he was acquainted with his plan, and subjected the conscience of Judas to do what he would do. If he relented, on him to do so at once.

Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

31 ¶ Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now <sup>5</sup> is the Son of man glorified, and God <sup>6</sup> is glorified in him.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. xii. 23; xvii. 1-6. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xiv. 13, 1 Pet. iv. 11.

If he could still pursue his wicked plan, and go forward when he was conscious that the Saviour knew his design, let him do this at once. God adopts all means to bring men to a decision. He calls upon them to act decisively, firmly, and immediately. He does not allow them the privilege to deliberate about wicked deeds, but calls on them to act at once, and to show whether they will obey or disobey him, whether they will serve him or whether they will betray his cause. He knows all their plans, as Jesus did that of Judas; and he calls on men to act under the full conviction that he knows all their soul. Sin, thus, is a vast evil. When men can sin, knowing that God sees it all, it shows that the heart is fully set in them to do evil, and that there is nothing that will restrain them.

28, 29. *No man—knew.* This shows that Jesus had signified to John only who it was that should betray him. ¶ *The bag.* The travelling bag in which they put their common property. See Note, ch. xii. 6. ¶ *Have need of against the feast.* The feast of the passover. This feast continued seven days, and they supposed that Jesus had directed him to make preparation for their wants on those days.

30. *It was night.* It was in the evening, or early part of the night. What is recorded in the following chapters took place the same night.

31. *Now is the Son of man glorified.* The last deed is done that was necessary to secure the death of the Son of man, the glory that shall result to him from that death, and the wonderful success of the gospel; the exaltation of the Messiah, and the public and striking attention of

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye<sup>1</sup> shall

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiv. 4—6.

God to him in the view of the universe. See Note on ch. xii. 32.

32. *If God be glorified in him.* If the life and death of the Messiah be such as to lead to the honour of God, such as shall manifest his perfections, and show his goodness, truth, and justice, then he will show that he thus approves his work. ¶ *He will glorify him.* He will honour the Messiah. He will not suffer him to go without attestation of his acceptance, and of the honour that God puts in him. Jesus here confidently anticipated that the Father would show that he was pleased with what he had done. He did it in the miracles that attended his death, and in his resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and in the success of the gospel. We may remark, that God will always, in the proper time and way, manifest his approbation of those who live so as to promote the honour of his name. ¶ *In himself.* Or, by himself; by a direct and public expression of his approbation. Not by the ministry of angels, or by any other subordinate attestation, but by an expression that shall be direct from him. This was done by his direct interposition in his resurrection and ascension to heaven. ¶ *Will straightway.* Immediately, or without delay. This refers to the fact that the time when God would put this honour on him was at hand. His death, resurrection, and ascension, were near.

33. *Little children.* An expression of great tenderness, denoting Christ's deep interest in the welfare of his disciples. As he was about to leave them he endeavours to mitigate their grief by the most tender expressions of attachment, showing that he felt for them the deep interest which a parent feels for his children. The word children is often given to Christians as implying, 1. That God is their Father, and that they sustain towards him that endearing relation. Rom. viii. 14, 15. 2. As denoting their need of

seek me: and <sup>2</sup> as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you.

34 A new <sup>3</sup> commandment I

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 33, 34; viii. 21. Gal. vi. 2. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xv. 12, 17. Lev. xix. 18. Eph. v. 2. 1 Thess. iv. 9. Jas. ii. 8. 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 John ii. 7, 8; iii. 11, 14—18, 23; iv. 20, 21.

teaching and guidance, as children need the aid and counsel of a father. See the corresponding term babes used in 1 Cor. iii. 1; 1 Peter ii. 2. 3. It is used as it is here, as an expression of tenderness and affection. See Gal. iv. 19; 1 John ii. 1, 12, 28; iii. 7, 18; iv. 4; v. 21. ¶ *Yet a little while I am with you.* He did not conceal the fact that he was soon to leave them. There is something exceedingly tender in this address. It shows that he loved them to the end; that as their friend and guide, as a man, he felt deeply at the thoughts of parting from them, and leaving them to a cold and unfeeling world. A parting scene at death is always one of tenderness; and it is well when, like this, there is the presence of the Saviour, to break the agony of the parting pang, and to console us with the words of his grace. ¶ *As I said to the Jews.* See ch. vii. 34. ¶ *So now I say to you.* That is, they could not follow him then. Ver. 36; ch. xiv. 2. He was about to die and return to God, and for a time they must be willing to be separated from him. But he consoled them, ver. 36, with the assurance that the separation would be only temporary, and that they should afterwards follow him.

34. *A new commandment.* This command he gave them as he was about to leave them, to be a badge of discipleship, by which they might be known as his friends and followers, and by which they might be distinguished from all others. It is called *new*, not because there was no command before that requires us to love our fellow men, for one great precept of the law was that we should love our neighbour as ourselves. Lev. xix. 18. But it was new because it had never before been made that by which any class or body of men had been known and distinguished. The Jew was known by his external rites, by his peculiarity of dress, &c., the philosopher, by some other mark of distinction; the mili-

give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 ¶ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

36 ¶ Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou

canst not follow me now; but thou shalt <sup>1</sup> follow me afterwards.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will <sup>2</sup> lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxi. 18. <sup>2</sup> Pet. i. 14. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvi. 33—35. Mark xiv. 29—31. Luke xxii. 33, 34.

tary man by another, &c. In none of these cases had love for each other been the distinguishing and peculiar badge by which they were known. But in the case of Christians they were not to be known by distinctions of wealth, or learning, or fame; they were not to aspire to earthly distinctions, but they were to be distinguished by tender and constant attachment to each other. This was to surmount all distinction of country, of colour, of rank, of office, of sect. Here they were to feel that they were on a level, that they had common wants, were redeemed by the same sacred blood, and going to the same heaven. They were to befriend each other in trials, be careful of each other's feelings and reputation, deny themselves to promote each other's welfare. See Gal. vi. 2. 1 Thess. iv. 9. 2 Thess. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 22. 2 Pet. i. 7. 1 John iii. 23. In all these places the command of Jesus is repeated or referred to; and it shows that the first disciples considered this indeed as the peculiar law of Christ. This command or law was moreover new in regard to the extent to which this love was to be carried. For he immediately adds, *as I have loved you, that ye also love one another*. His love for them was strong, continued, unremitting; and he was now about to show his love for them in death. Ch. xv. 13. So in 1 John iii. 16, it is said that "we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." This was a new expression of love, and it showed the strength of attachment which we ought to have for Christians, and how ready we should be to endure hardships, to encounter dangers, and to practise self-denial, to benefit those for whom the Son of God laid down his life.

35. *By this shall all men, &c.* That is, your love for each other shall be so decisive evidence that you are like the Saviour, that all men shall see and know

it. It shall be the thing by which you shall be known among all men. You shall not be known by peculiar rites or habits, not by a peculiar form of dress or manner of speech; not by peculiar austerities and unusual customs, like the Pharisees, the Essenes, or the scribes, but by deep, genuine, and tender love. And it is well known that it was this which eminently distinguished the first Christians, and was the subject of remark by the surrounding pagans. "See," said the heathen, "see how they love one another, and how they are ready to lay down their lives for each other." Alas! how changed is the spirit of the christian world since then. Perhaps, of all the commands of Jesus, the observance of this is that which is least apparent to a surrounding world. It is not so much that they are divided into different sects, for this may be consistent with love for each other; but it is the want of deep-felt, genuine love towards Christians, even of our own denomination; the absence of genuine self-denial; the pride of rank and wealth; and the fact that professed Christians are often known by any thing else rather than by true attachment to those who bear the same christian name and image. The true Christian loves religion wherever it is found, equally in a prince or in a slave, in the mansion of wealth or in the cottage of poverty, on the throne or in the hut of want. He overlooks the distinction of sect, of colour, and of nations; and wherever he finds a man who bears the christian name, and manifests the christian spirit, he loves him. And this, more and more as the millennium draws near, will be the peculiar badge of the professed children of God. Christians will love their own denominations less than they love the spirit and temper of the Christian, wherever it may be found.

37, 38. See Note, Matt. xxvi. 33, 34.



Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

# CHAPTER XIV.

*The sorrowing disciples comforted, 1—14.*

*The Holy Ghost promised, 15—26.*

*Christ would not forsake his own, 27—31.*

**L**ET<sup>1</sup> not you heart be troubled :

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 27. Isa. xliii. 1, 2. 2 Thess. ii. 2.

# CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Let not your heart be troubled.* The disciples had been greatly distressed at what Jesus had said about leaving them. Ch. xvi. 5, 6. Perhaps they had indicated their distress to him in some manner by their countenance or their expressions ; and he proceeds now to administer to them such consolations as their circumstances made proper. The discourse in this chapter was delivered, doubtless, while they were sitting at the table, partaking of the supper. See ver. 31. That in the two following chapters, and the prayer in ch. xvii. were while they were going to the mount of Olives. There is nowhere to be found a discourse so beautiful, so tender, so full of weighty thoughts, and so adapted to produce comfort. It is the consolatory part of our religion, where Christ brings to bear on the mind full of anxiety, and perplexity, and care, the tender and inimitably beautiful truths of his gospel ; truths fitted to allay every fear, silence every murmur, and give consolation to the soul. In the case of the disciples there was much to trouble them. They were about to part with their beloved, tender friend. They were to be left alone to meet persecutions and trials. They were without wealth, without friends, without honours. And it is not improbable that they felt that his death would demolish all their schemes, for they had not yet fully learned the doctrine that the Messiah must suffer and die. Luke xxiv. 21. ¶ *Ye believe in God.* This may be read either in the indicative mood or the imperative. Probably it should be read in the imperative. "Believe on God, and believe on me." If there were no other reason for it, this is sufficient, that there was no more evidence that they did believe in God, than that they believed

ye believe in God, believe<sup>2</sup> also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go<sup>3</sup> to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, <sup>4</sup> I will come again,

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xli. 2, 3. Eph. i. 12, 13. 1 Pet. i. 12. <sup>3</sup> Heb. vi. 20 ; ix. 5, 24. Rev. xxi. 2. <sup>4</sup> Heb. ix. 28.

in Jesus. All the ancient versions, except the Latin, read it thus. The Saviour told them that their consolation was to be found at this time in confidence in God and in him ; and he intimated what he had so often told them and the Jews, that there was an indissoluble union between him and the Father. This union he takes occasion to explain to them more fully. Ver. 7—12. ¶ *Believe in.* Put confidence in, rely on for support and consolation.

2, 3. *In my Father's house.* Most interpreters understand this of heaven, as the peculiar dwelling-place or palace of God. But it may include the universe, as the abode of the omnipresent God. ¶ *Are many mansions.* The word rendered *mansions* means either the act of dwelling in any place, as in ver. 23, or it means the place where one dwells. It is taken from the verb to remain, and signifies the place where one dwells or remains. It is applied by the Greek writers to the tents or temporary habitations which soldiers pitch in their marches. It denotes a dwelling of less permanency than the word house. It is commonly understood as affirming that in heaven there is ample room to receive all who will come ; that, therefore, the disciples might be sure that they would not be excluded. Some have understood it as affirming that there will be different grades in the joys of heaven ; that some of the mansions of the ~~same~~ will be nearer to God than others, agreeably to 1 Cor. xv. 40, 41. But, perhaps, this passage may have a meaning which has not occurred to interpreters. Jesus was consoling his disciples, who were affected with grief at the idea of separation. To comfort them he addressed them in this language : "The universe is the dwelling-place of my Father. All is

and receive you unto myself; that where <sup>1</sup> I am, *there* ye may be also.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 26; xvii. 24. 1 Thess. iv. 17.

in house. Whether on earth or in heaven, we are still in his habitation. In that vast abode of God there are many mansions. The earth is one of them. Heaven is another. Whether here, or there, we are still in the house, in one of the mansions of our Father, in one of the apartments of his vast abode. This we ought continually to feel, and to rejoice that we are permitted to occupy any part of his dwelling-place. Nor does it differ much whether we are in this mansion or another. It should not be a matter of grief when we are called to pass from one part of this vast habitation of God to another. I am indeed about to leave you, but I am going only to another part of his vast dwelling-place of God. I shall still be in the same universal habitation with you, still in the house of the same God, and am going for an important purpose, to fit up another abode for your eternal dwelling." If this be the meaning, then there is in the discourse true consolation. We see that the death of a Christian is not to be dreaded, nor is it an event over which we should immoderately weep. It is but removing from one apartment of God's universal dwelling-place to another, one who will still be in his house, and still feel the same interest in all that pertains to his kingdom. And especially the removal of the Saviour from the earth was an event over which Christians should rejoice, for he is still in the house of God, and still preparing mansions of rest for his people. ¶ *If it were not so, &c.* Jesus had concealed from them no truth. You have been cherishing this hope of a future abode with God. Had it been ill-founded, I would have told you plainly, as I have told you other things. Had any of you been deceived, as Judas was, I would have made it known to you, as I did to him. ¶ *I go to prepare a place for you.* By his going is meant his death and ascent to heaven. The figure here is taken from one who is on a journey, who goes before his companions to provide a place to lodge in, and to make the necessary preparations for their entertainment. It evidently means that he, by

4 And whither I go ye <sup>2</sup> know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord,

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 2, 28; ch. xiii. 3; xvi. 28. Luke xxiv. 26.

the work which he was yet to perform in heaven, would secure their admission there, and obtain for them the blessings of eternal life. That work would consist mainly in his intercession. Heb. iv. 14, 16; vii. 25—27; x. 12, 13, 19—22. ¶ *That where I am.* This language could be used by no one who was not then in the place of which he was speaking, and it is just such language as one would naturally use who was both God and man; in reference to his human nature, speaking of his going to his Father; and in reference to his divine nature, speaking as if he was then with God. ¶ *Ye may be also.* This was language eminently fitted to comfort them. Though about to leave them, yet he would not always be absent. He would come again at the day of judgment, and gather all his friends to himself, and they should be ever with him. Heb. ix. 28. So shall all Christians be with him. And so, when we part with a beloved christian friend by death, we may realize that the separation will not be eternal. We shall meet again, and dwell in a place where there shall be no more separation and no more tears.

4. *Whither I go ye know.* He had so often told them that he was to die, and rise, and ascend to heaven, that they could not but understand it. Matt. xvi. 21. Luke ix. 22; xviii. 31, 32. ¶ *The way ye know.* That is, the way that leads to the dwelling-place to which he was going. The way which they were to tread was to obey his precepts, imitate his example, and follow him. Ver. 6.

5. *We know not whither thou goest.* Though Jesus had so often told them of his approaching death and resurrection, yet it seems they did not understand him. Nor did they fully comprehend him until after his resurrection. See Luke xxiv. 21. They entertained the common notions of a temporal kingdom; they supposed still that he was to be an earthly prince and leader, and they did not comprehend the reason why he should die. Thomas confessed his ignorance, and the Saviour again patiently explained his meaning. All this shows the difficulty of believing when

we know not whither thou <sup>1</sup> goest, and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, <sup>2</sup> and the truth, <sup>3</sup> and the life: <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heb. v. 11, 12. <sup>2</sup> Ch. x. 9. Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. Heb. x. 19, 20. <sup>3</sup> Ch. i. 17; xv. 1. <sup>4</sup> Ch. i. 4; xi. 25.

the mind is full of prejudice and of contrary opinions. Had Thomas laid aside his previous opinions, had he been willing to receive the truth as Jesus plainly spoke it, there would have been no difficulty. Faith would have been an easy and natural exercise of the mind. And so with the sinner. If he were willing to receive the plain and unequivocal doctrines of the Bible, there would be no difficulty. But his mind is full of opposite opinions and plans, occupied with errors and vanities; and these are the reasons, and the only reasons, why he is not a Christian. Yet who would say that, after the plain instructions of Jesus, Thomas might not have understood him? And who will dare to say that any sinner may not lay aside his prejudices and improper views, and receive the plain and simple teaching of the Bible?

6. *I am the way.* See Isa. xxxv. 8. By this is meant, doubtless, that they, and all others, were to have access to God only by obeying the instructions, imitating the example, and depending on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the leader in the road, the guide to the wandering, the teacher of the ignorant, and the example to all. See ch. vi. 68. Heb. v. 8, 9. 1 Pet. ii. 21. ¶ *The truth.* The source of truth, or he who originates and communicates truth for the salvation of men. Truth is a representation of things as they are. And the life, the purity, and the teaching of Jesus Christ was the most complete and perfect representation of the things of the eternal world, that has been or can be presented to man. The ceremonies of the Jews were shadows; the life of Jesus was the truth. The opinions of men are fancy, but the doctrines of Jesus were nothing more than a representation of facts as they exist in the government of God. It is implied in this also that Jesus was the Fountain of all truth; that by his inspiration the prophets spoke; and by him all truth is communicated to men. See Note, ch. i. 17. ¶ *The life.* See ch. xi. 25; Note, ch. i. 4. ¶ *No man cometh to the Father but by me.* To

no man <sup>5</sup> cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and

<sup>5</sup> Acts iv. 12.

come to the Father is to obtain his favour; to have access to his throne by prayer, and finally to enter his kingdom. No man can obtain any of these things except by the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. By coming by him is meant coming in his name, and depending on his merits. We are ignorant, and he only can guide us. We are sinful, and it is only by his merits that we can be pardoned. We are blind, and he only can enlighten us. God has appointed him as the Mediator, and has ordained that all blessings shall descend to this world through him. Hence he has put the world under his control, has given the affairs of men into his hand and has appointed him to dispense whatever may be necessary for our penitence, pardon, and salvation. Acts iv. 12; v. 31.

7. *If ye had known me.* By this Jesus does not intend to say that they were not truly his disciples, but that they had not a full and accurate knowledge of his character and designs. They still retained, to a large extent, the Jewish notions respecting a temporal Messiah, and did not fully understand that he was to die and be raised from the dead. ¶ *Ye should have known my Father also.* You would have known the counsels and designs of my Father respecting my death and resurrection. If you had been divested of your Jewish prejudices about the Messiah, if you had understood that it was proper for me to die, you would also have understood the purposes and plans of God in my death; and knowing that, you would have seen that it was wise and best. We see here that a correct knowledge of the character and work of Christ is the same as a correct knowledge of the counsels and plans of God. And we see also that the reason why we have not such a knowledge, are our prejudices and erroneous views. ¶ *From henceforth.* From this time. From my death and resurrection you shall understand the plans and counsels of God. ¶ *Ye know him.* You shall have just views of his plans and designs. ¶ *Have seen him.* That is, had seen

from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he <sup>1</sup> that hath seen me hath seen

<sup>1</sup> Col. i. 15.

Jesus Christ, his image, and the brightness of his glory, Heb. i. 3, which was the same as having seen the Father. Ver. 9.

8. *Lord, show us the Father.* Philip here referred to some outward and visible manifestation of God. God had manifested himself in various ways to the prophets and saints of old, and Philip affirmed that if some such manifestation should be made to them they would be satisfied. It was right to desire evidence that Jesus was the Messiah, but such evidence had been afforded abundantly in the miracles and teaching of Jesus, and that should have sufficed them.

9. *So long time.* For more than three years Jesus had been with them. He had raised the dead, cast out devils, healed the sick, done those things which no one could have done who had not come from God. In that time they had had full opportunity to learn his character, and his mission from God. Nor was it needful, after so many proofs, that God should visibly manifest himself to them in order that they might be convinced that he came from him. ¶ *He that hath seen me.* He that has seen my works, heard my doctrines, and understood my character. He that has given proper attention to the proofs that I have afforded that I came from God. ¶ *Hath seen the Father.* This cannot refer to the essence or substance of God, for he is invisible, and in that respect no man has seen God at any time. All that is meant when it is said that God is seen, is, that some manifestation of him has been made, or some such exhibition as that we may learn his character, his will, and his plans. In this case it cannot mean that he that had seen Jesus with the bodily eyes had in the same sense seen God; but he that had been a witness of his miracles and of his

the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

10 Believeest thou not that I am in the Father, <sup>2</sup> and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 11, 20; ch. i. 1—3; x. 30, 38; xvii. 21, 23.

transfiguration, that had heard his doctrines and studied his character, had had full evidence of his divine mission, and of the will and purpose of the Father in sending him. The knowledge of the Son was itself, of course, the knowledge of the Father. There was such an intimate union in their nature and design, that he who understood the one understood also the other. See Notes, ch. i. 18. Matt. xi. 27. Luke x. 22.

10. *I am in the Father.* See Note, ch. x. 38. ¶ *The words that I speak, &c.* See Note, ch. vii. 16, 17. ¶ *The Father that dwelleth in me.* Literally, "The Father remaining in me." This denotes most intimate union; so that the works which Jesus did might be said to be done by the Father. It implies a more intimate union than can subsist between a man and God. Had Jesus been a mere man, like the prophets, he would have said, "The Father who sent or commissioned me, doeth the works." But here there is reference, doubtless, to that mysterious and peculiar union which subsists between the Father and the Son. ¶ *He doeth the works.* The miracles which had been wrought by Jesus. The Father could be said to do them on account of the intimate union between him and the Son. See ch. v. 17, 19, 36, x. 30.

11. *Believe me, &c.* Believe my declarations, that I am in the Father, &c. There were two grounds on which they might believe; one was his own testimony, the other was his works. ¶ *Or else.* If credit is not given to my words, let it be given to my miracles. ¶ *For the very works' sake.* On account of the works. Or, be convinced by the miracles themselves. Either his own testimony was sufficient to convince them, or the

*The disciples comforted.*

JOHN.

we know not whither thou <sup>1</sup> goest, and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, <sup>2</sup> and the truth, <sup>3</sup> and the life: <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Heb. v. 11, 12. <sup>2</sup> Ch. x. 9. Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. Heb. x. 19, 20. <sup>3</sup> Ch. i. 17; xv. 1. <sup>4</sup> Ch. i. 4; xi. 25.

the mind is full of prejudice and of contrary opinions. Had Thomas laid aside his previous opinions, had he been willing to receive the truth as Jesus plainly spoke it, there would have been no difficulty. Faith would have been an easy and natural exercise of the mind. And so with the sinner. If he were willing to receive the plain and unequivocal doctrines of the Bible, there would be no difficulty. But his mind is full of opposite opinions and plans, occupied with errors and vanities; and these are the reasons, and the only reasons, why he is not a Christian. Yet who would say that, after the plain instructions of Jesus, Thomas might not have understood him? And who will dare to say that any sinner may not lay aside his prejudices and improper views, and receive the plain and simple teaching of the Bible?

6. *I am the way.* See Isa. xxxv. 8. By this is meant, doubtless, that they, and all others, were to have access to God only by obeying the instructions, imitating the example, and depending on the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the leader in the road, the guide to the wandering, the teacher of the ignorant, and the example to all. See ch. vi. 68. Heb. v. 8, 9. 1 Pet. ii. 21. ¶ *The truth.* The source of truth, or he who originates and communicates truth for the salvation of men. Truth is a representation of things as they are. And the life, the purity, and the teaching of Jesus Christ was the most complete and perfect representation of the things of the eternal world, that has been or can be presented to man. The ceremonies of the Jews were shadows; the life of Jesus was the truth. The opinions of men are fancy; the doctrines of Jesus were nothing more than a representation of facts as they are in the government of God. It is found in this also that Jesus was the revealer of all truth; that by his inspiration the prophets spoke; and by him all truth was communicated to men. See Note, ¶ *The life.* See ch. xi. 25; No man cometh to the

no man <sup>5</sup> come but by me.

7 If ye had have known my

5 A

come to the Father to have access to and finally to en man can obtain an by the merits of By coming by his his name, and de We are ignorant, us. We are sinfu merits that we can blind, and he o God has appointe and has ordained descend to this wo he has put the w has given the affai and has appointed ever may be nec pardon, and salvat

7. *If ye had* Jesus does not in were not truly his had not a full and his character an retained, to a la notions respecting and did not fully to die and be raise should have knowe would have know signs of my Fath and resurrection. vested of your j the Messiah, if that it was prop would also have and plans of G knowing that, you was wise and bes correct knowledg work of Christ is knowledge of th God. And we s why we have not our prejudices ¶ *From hencef* From my deat shall understand of God. ¶ *Ye* have just views ¶ *Have seen*

Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He <sup>1</sup> that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also;

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxi. 21. Mark xvi. 17. Luke x. 17—19. Acts iii. 6—8.

many miracles which he had wrought in healing the sick, raising the dead, &c.

12. *He that believeth on me.* This promise had doubtless peculiar reference to the apostles themselves. They were full of grief at his departure, and Jesus, in order to console them, directed them to the great honour which was to be conferred on them, and to the assurance that God would not leave them, but would attend them in their ministry with the demonstrations of his mighty power. It cannot be understood of all his followers, for the circumstances of the promise do not require us to understand it thus, and it has not been a matter of fact that all Christians have possessed power to do greater works than the Lord Jesus. It is a general promise that greater works than he performed should be done by his followers, without specifying that all his followers would be instrumental in doing them. *The works that I do.* The miracles of healing the sick, raising the dead, &c. This was done by the apostles in many instances. See Acts v. 15; xiii. 11; xiv. 8—10; xix. 12. *Greater works than these shall he do.* Interpreters have been at a loss in what way to understand this. The most probable meaning of the passage is the following. The word *greater* cannot refer to the miracles themselves, for the works of the apostles did not exceed those of Jesus in power. No higher exertion of power was put forth, or could be, than raising the dead. But though not greater in themselves considered, yet they were greater in their effects. They made a deeper impression on mankind. They were attended with more extensive results. They were means of the conversion of more sinners. The works of Jesus were confined to Jerusalem. They were seen by few. The works of the apostles were witnessed by many. The effect of their ministry was that thousands

and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13 And <sup>2</sup> whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xv. 7, 16; xvi. 23, 26. Luke xi. 1. 1 John v. 14.

from among the Jews and Gentiles were converted to the christian faith. The word *greater* here is used, therefore, not to denote the absolute exertion of power, but the effect which the miracles would have on mankind. The word *works* here probably denotes not merely miracles, but all things that the apostles did that made an impression on mankind, including their travels, their labours, their doctrine, &c. *Because I go unto my Father.* He would there intercede for them; and especially by his going to the Father, the Holy Spirit would be sent down to attend them in their ministry, ver. 26, 28; xvi. 7—14. See Matt. xxviii. 18. By his going to the Father is particularly denoted his exaltation to heaven, and his being placed as head over all things to his church. Eph. i. 20—22. Phil. ii. 9—11. By his being exalted there, the Holy Spirit was given, ch. xvi. 7; and by his power thus put forth, the Gentiles were brought to hear and obey the gospel.

13. *Whatsoever ye shall ask.* This promise referred particularly to the apostles, in their work of spreading the gospel. It is however true of all Christians, if what they ask is in faith, and according to the will of God. Jas. i. 6. 1 John v. 14. *In my name.* This is equivalent to saying on my account, or for my sake. If a man who has money in a bank authorizes us to draw it, we are said to do it in his name. If a son authorizes us to apply to his father for aid because we are his friends, we do it in the name of his son, and the favour will be bestowed on us from the regard the parent has to his son, and through him to all his friends. So we are permitted to apply to God in the name of his Son Jesus Christ. Because God is in him well pleased, Matt. iii. 17; and because we are the friends of his Son, he answers our requests. And though we are unworthy, yet he loves

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

15 ¶ If <sup>1</sup> ye love me, keep my commandments.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 21, 23; ch. xv. 10, 14. 1 John v. 3.

us on account of his Son, and because he sees in us his image. No privilege is greater than that of approaching God in the name of his Son; and no blessings of salvation can be conferred on any who do not come in his name. ¶ *That will I do.* Being exalted, he will be possessed of all power in heaven and earth, Matt. xxviii. 18, and he therefore could fulfil all their desires. ¶ *That the Father may be glorified in the Son.* See Note, ch. xiii. 31.

15. *If ye love me.* Do not show your love by grief at my departure merely, or by profession, but by obedience. ¶ *Keep my commandments.* This is the only proper evidence of love to Jesus, for mere profession is not proof of love. But that love to Christ which leads us to do all his will, to love each other, to deny ourselves, to take up our cross, and to follow him through evil report and through good report, is the only true attachment. The evidence which we have that a child loves its parents, is when that child is willing without hesitation, gainsaying, or murmuring, to do all that the parent requires him to do. So the apostles and all disciples were required to show that they were attached to him supremely by yielding to all his requirements, and in the face of all ridicule and opposition patiently to do his will. 1 John v. 2, 3.

16. *I will pray the Father.* This refers to his intercession after his death and ascension to heaven; for this prayer was to be connected with their keeping his commandments. In what way he makes intercession in heaven for his people we do not know. The fact, however, is clearly made known. Rom. viii. 34. Heb. iv. 14, 15; vii. 25. It is as the result of his intercession in heaven that we obtain all our blessings, and through him that our prayers are to be presented, and made efficacious before God. ¶ *Another Comforter.* Jesus had been to them a counsellor, a guide, a friend, while he was with them. He had instructed them, had borne with their prejudices and ignorance, and had

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that <sup>2</sup> he may abide with you for ever;

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xv. 26.

administered to their consolation in the times of despondency. But he was about to leave them now alone in an unfriendly world. The other Comforter was to be given as a compensation for his absence, or to perform the offices towards them which he would have performed if he had been personally with them. And from this we may learn, in part, what is the office of the Spirit: It is to furnish to all Christians the instruction and consolation which would be given by the personal presence of Jesus. Ch. xvi. 14. To the apostles, it was particularly to inspire them with the knowledge of all truth, ch. xiv. 26; xv. 26. Besides this, he came to convince men of sin. See Note, ch. xvi. 8—11. It was proper that such an agent should be sent into the world: 1. Because it was a part of the plan that Jesus should ascend to heaven after his death. 2. Unless some heavenly agent should be sent to carry forward the work of salvation, man would reject it and perish. 3. Jesus could not be personally and bodily present in all places, with the vast multitudes who should believe on him. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent, and can teach them all. Note, ch. xvi. 7. 4. It was manifestly a part of the plan of redemption that each of the Persons of the Trinity should perform his appropriate work: the Father in sending his Son; the Son in making atonement and interceding; and the Spirit in applying the work to the hearts of men.

The word translated *Comforter* is used in the New Testament five times. In four instances it is applied to the Holy Spirit. Ch. xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7. In the other instance it is applied to the Lord Jesus. 1 John ii. 1: "We have an advocate," Comforter. It is used, therefore, only by John. The verb from which it is taken has many significations. Its proper meaning is to call one to us, Acts xxvii. 20; then to call one to aid us, as an advocate in a court; then to exhort or entreat, to pray or implore, as an advocate does, and to comfort or console, by suggesting reasons or arguments for

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth ; whom <sup>1</sup> the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither

knoweth him : but ye know him ; for he dwelleth with you, and <sup>2</sup> shall be in you.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 14. Rev. ii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 9. 1 John ii. 27.

consolation. The word is frequently used in the greek and jewish writers to denote an advocate in a court; one who intercedes for us, a monitor, a teacher, an assistant, a helper. It is somewhat difficult, therefore, to fix the precise meaning of the word. It may be translated either advocate, monitor, teacher, or helper. What the office is, is to be learned from what we are elsewhere told he does. We learn particularly from the accounts that our Saviour gives of his work that that office was: 1. To comfort them; to be with him in his absence, and to supply his place; and this is properly expressed by the word *Comforter*. 2. To teach them, or remind them of truth; and this might be expressed by the word monitor, or teacher. Ver. 26; xv. 26, 27. 3. To aid them in their work, to advocate their cause, or to assist them in advocating the cause of religion in the world, and in bringing sinners to repentance; and this may be expressed by the word advocate. Ch. xvi. 7—13. It was also by the Spirit that they were enabled to stand before kings and magistrates, and boldly to speak in the name of Jesus. Matt. x. 20. These seem to comprise all the meanings of the word in the New Testament, but no single word in our language expresses fully the sense of the original. ¶ *That he may abide with you for ever.* Not that he should remain with you for a few years as I have done, and then leave you, but be with you in all places to the close of your life. He shall be your constant guide and attendant.

17. *The Spirit of truth.* He is thus called here because he would teach them the truth, or would guide them into all truth. (Ch. xvi. 13. He would keep them from all error, and teach them the truth which, either by writing or preaching, they were to communicate to others. ¶ *The world.* The term *world* is often used to denote all who are entirely under the influence of the things of this world, of pride, and ambition, and pleasure; all who are not Christians, and especially all who are addicted to gross vices and pursuits. Ch. xii. 31. 1 Cor. i. 21; xi. 32. 2 Cor.

iv. 4. ¶ *Cannot receive.* Cannot admit as a teacher, or comforter; or cannot receive in his offices of enlightening and purifying. The reason why they could not do this is immediately added, and is shown to be not because they had no power to do it, but for some other reason. ¶ *Because it seeth him not.* The men of the world are under the influences of the senses. They walk by sight, and not by faith. Hence what they cannot perceive by their senses; what does not gratify their sight, or taste, or feeling; makes no impression on them. As they cannot see the operations of the Spirit, ch. iii. 8, they judge that all that is said of his influence is delusive, and hence they cannot receive him. They have an erroneous mode of judging of what is for the welfare of man. ¶ *Neither knoweth him.* To *know*, in the scriptures often means more than the act of the mind in simply understanding a thing. It denotes every act or emotion of the mind that is requisite in receiving the proper impression of a truth. Hence it often includes the idea of approbation, of love, of cordial feeling. Psa. i. 6; xxxvii. 18; cxxxviii. 6. Nah. i. 7. 2 Tim. ii. 19. In this place it means the approbation of the heart; and as the world does not approve of, or desire the aid of the Spirit, so it is said they cannot receive him. They have no love for him, and they reject him. Men often consider his work in the conversion of sinners, and in revivals as delusion. They love the world so much that they cannot understand his work or embrace him. ¶ *He dwelleth in you.* See Note, ch. v. 38. The Spirit dwells in Christians by his sacred influences. There is no personal union, no physical indwelling, for God is essentially present in one place as much as in another. But he works in us repentance, peace, joy, meekness, &c. He teaches us, guides us, and comforts us. See Note on Gal. v. 22—24. Thus he is said to dwell in us when we are made pure, peaceable, holy, humble; when we become like him, and cherish his sacred influences. The word *dwelleth* means to remain with them. Jesus was to be taken away, and



18 I will not leave you <sup>1</sup> comfortless: I <sup>2</sup> will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, <sup>3</sup> and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because <sup>4</sup> I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know

<sup>1</sup> Or, *orphans*. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 3, 28. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vii. 33; xii. 35; xvi. 16, 22. <sup>4</sup> Heb. vii. 25.

the Spirit would remain. It is also implied that they would know his presence, and have assurance that they were under his guidance. This was true of the apostles as inspired men, and it is true of all Christians that by ascertaining that they have the graces of the Spirit, joy, peace, long suffering, &c., they know that they are the children of God. 1 John iii. 24; v. 19.

18. *Comfortless*. Greek, *Orphans*. Jesus here addresses them as children, ch. xiii. 38. He says that he would show them the kindness of a parent, and though he was going away, he would provide for their future welfare. And even while he was absent, yet they would sustain to him still the relation of children. Though he was to die, yet he would live again. Though absent in body, yet he would be present with them by his Spirit. Though he was to go away to heaven, yet he would return again to them. See ver. 3.

19. *A little while*. This was the day before his death. ¶ *Seeth me no more*. No more until the day of judgment. The men of the world would not see him visibly, and they had not the eye of faith to discern him. ¶ *But ye see me*. Ye shall continue to see me by faith, even when the world cannot. You will continue to see me by the eye of faith as still your gracious Saviour and Friend. ¶ *Because I live*. Though the Saviour was about to die, yet was he also about to be raised from the dead. He was to continue to live, and though absent from them, yet he would feel the same interest in their welfare. This expression does not refer particularly to his resurrection, but to his continuing to live. He had a nature which could not die. As Mediator also he would be raised, and continue to live. And he would have both power and inclination to give them also life; to defend them, and bring them with him.

that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He <sup>5</sup> that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

<sup>5</sup> Ver. 15, 23.

¶ *Ye shall live also*. This doubtless refers to their future eternal life. And we learn from this: 1. That the life of the Christian depends on that of Christ. They are united, and if they were separated, the Christian could neither enjoy spiritual life here, nor eternal joy hereafter. 2. The fact that Jesus lives, is a pledge that all who believe in him shall be saved. He has power over all our spiritual foes, and he can deliver us from the hands of our enemies, and from all temptations and trials.

20. *At that day*. In the time when my life shall be fully manifested to you, and you shall receive the assurance that I live. This refers to the time after his resurrection, and to the manifestations which in various ways he would make that he was alive. ¶ *That I am in my Father, &c.* That we are most intimately and indissolubly united. See Note, ch. x. 38. ¶ *Ye in me*. That there is a union between us which can never be severed. See Note, ch. xv. 1—7.

21. *He that hath, &c.* This intimate union is further manifested by these facts. 1. That true love to Jesus will produce obedience. See ver. 15. 2. That those who love him shall be loved of the Father, showing that there is a union between the Father and the Son. 3. That Jesus also will love them, evincing still the same union. Religion is love. And the love of the holy Being or object, is the love of all. The kingdom of God is one. His people, though called by different names, are one. They are united to each other, and to God; and the bond which unites the whole kingdom in one is love. ¶ *Will manifest myself to him*. To manifest is to show, to make appear, to place before the eyes so that an object may be seen. This means that Jesus would so show himself to his followers that they should see and know that he

*The Holy Ghost promised.* JOHN.

A.D. 33.

22 Judas <sup>1</sup> saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and <sup>2</sup> we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 3. *Lebbeus. Thaddæus, Mark iii. 18. Luke vi. 16.* <sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 17-19; vi. 56; x. 30. 1 John ii. 24. Rev. iii. 20.

was their Saviour. In what way this is done, see ver. 23.

22. *Judas saith unto him.* This was the same as Lebbeus or Thaddæus. See Matt. x. 3. He was the brother of James, and the author of the epistle of Jude. ¶ *How is it, &c.* Probably Judas thought that he spake only of his resurrection, and he did not readily see how it could be that he could show himself to them, and not be seen also by others.

23. *Will keep my words.* See ver. 15. ¶ *We will come to him.* We will come to him with the manifestation of pardon, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It means that God will manifest himself to the soul, as a Father and Friend; that Jesus will manifest himself as a Saviour. That is, that there will be shed abroad in the heart just views, and proper feelings towards God and Christ. The Christian will rejoice in the perfections of God and of Christ, and will delight to contemplate the glories of a present Saviour. The condition of a sinner is represented as that of one who has gone astray from God, and from whom God has withdrawn. Psa. lviii. 3. Prov. xxviii. 10. Ezek. xiv. 11. He is alienated from God. Isa. i. 4. Eph. ii. 12; iv. 18. Col. i. 21. Religion is represented as God's returning to the soul, and manifesting himself as reconciled through Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. v. 18. Col. i. 21. ¶ *Make our abode.* This is a figurative expression, implying that God and Christ would manifest themselves in no temporary way, but that it would be the privilege of Christians to enjoy this presence continually. They would take up their residence in the heart as the dwelling place, as a temple

which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But <sup>3</sup> the Comforter, *which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he* <sup>4</sup> shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 16. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xvi. 13. 1 John ii. 20, 27.

fit for their abode. See 1 Cor. iii. 16: "Ye are the temple of God;" vi. 19: "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," 2 Cor. vi. 16: "Ye are the temple of the living God." This does not mean that there is any personal union between Christians and God, that there is any peculiar indwelling of the essence of God in us, for God is essentially present in all places in the same way; but it is a figurative mode of speaking, denoting that the Christian is under the influence of God, that he rejoices in his presence, and that he has the views, the feelings, the joys which God produces in a redeemed soul, and with which he is pleased.

24. *The word which ye hear is not mine.* Note ch. v. 19; vii. 16.

25. *Have I spoken.* For your consolation and guidance. But though he had said so many things to console them, yet the Spirit would be given also as their Comforter and Guide.

26. *Will send in my name.* On my account. To perfect my work. To execute it as I would, in applying it to the hearts of men. See ver. 13. ¶ *Shall teach you all things.* All things which it was needful for them to understand in the apostolic office, and particularly those things which they were not prepared then to hear, or could not then understand. See ch. xvi. 12. Compare Note, Matt. x. 19, 20. This was a full promise that they should be inspired, and that in organizing the church, and in recording the truths necessary for its edification, they should be under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost. ¶ *Bring all things to your remembrance.* This probably refers to two things: 1. He would reasonably remind them of the

27 Peace <sup>1</sup> I leave with you, my peace I give unto you : not as the

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 14, 17. Ph. iv. 7.

sayings of Jesus, which they might otherwise have forgotten. In the organization of the church, and in composing the sacred history, he would preside over their memories, and recall such truths and doctrines as were necessary either for their comfort, or the edification of his people. Amidst the multitude of things which Jesus spake during a ministry of more than three years, it was to be expected that many things which he had uttered, that would be important for the edification of the church, would be forgotten. We see hence the nature of their inspiration. The Holy Spirit made use of their memories, and doubtless of all their natural faculties. He so presided over their memories as to recall what they had forgotten, and then it was recorded as a thing which they distinctly remembered, in the same way as we remember a thing which would have been forgotten had not some friend recalled it to our recollection. 2. The Holy Spirit would teach them the meaning of those things which the Saviour had spoken. Thus they did not understand till after his resurrection that he ought to be put to death, though he had repeatedly told them of it. Luke xxiv. 21, 25, 26. So they did not till then understand that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles, though this was also declared before. Compare Matt. iv. 15, 16 ; xii. 21, with Acts x. 44—48.

27. *Peace I leave with you.* This was a common form of benediction among the Jews. See Note, Matt. x. 13. It is the invocation of the blessings of peace and happiness. In this place it was, however, much more than a mere form, or an empty wish. It came from him who had power to make peace, and to confer it on all. Eph. ii. 15. It refers here particularly to the consolations which he gave to his disciples in view of his approaching death. He had exhorted them not to be troubled, ver. 1, and he had stated reasons enforcing the exhortation. He explained to them why he was about to leave them, he promised them that he would return, and he assured them that the Holy Ghost would come to comfort, teach, and guide them. By all these truths and promises,

world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

he provided for their peace in the time of his approaching departure. But the expression refers also doubtless to the peace which is given to all who love the Saviour. They are by nature enmity against God. Rom. viii. 7. Their minds were like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. Isa. lvii. 20. They were at war with conscience, with the law and perfections of God, and with all the truths of religion. Their state after conversion is described as a state of peace. They are reconciled to God, and they acquiesce in all his claims, and have a joy which the world knows not, in the word, the promises, the law, and the perfections of God; in the plan of salvation, and in the hopes of eternal life. See Rom. i. 7 ; v. 1 ; viii. 6 ; xiv. 17. Gal. v. 22. Eph. ii. 17 ; vi. 15. Phil. iv. 7. Col. iii. 15. ¶ *My peace.* Such as I only can impart. The peculiar peace which my religion is fitted to impart. ¶ *Not as the world.* 1. Not as the objects which men commonly pursue : pleasure, fame, wealth. They leave care, anxiety, remorse. They do not meet the desires of the immortal mind, and they are incapable of affording that peace which the soul needs. 2. Not as the men of the world give. They salute you with empty and flattering words, but their professed friendship is often feigned, and has no sincerity. You cannot be sure that they are sincere, but I am sincere. 3. Not as systems of philosophy and false religion give. They profess to give peace, but it is not real. It does not still the conscience, it does not take away sin, it does not reconcile the soul to God. 4. My peace is such as meets all the wants of the soul, silences the alarms of conscience, is fixed and sure amidst all external changes, and will abide in the hour of death and for ever. How desirable in a world of anxiety and care to possess this peace ! And how should all who have it not seek that which the world can neither give nor take away ! ¶ *Neither let it be afraid.* Of my pain, persecutions, or trials. You have a Friend who will never leave you, a peace that shall always attend you. See ver. 1.

28 Ye have heard<sup>1</sup> how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go<sup>2</sup> unto the Father: for<sup>3</sup> my Father is greater than I.

29 And now I have told you be-

<sup>1</sup> Ver. iii. 18; ch. xvi. 16—22. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 12.  
<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28.

28. *Ye have heard, &c.* Ver. 2, 3. ¶ *If ye love me.* This expression is not to be construed as if they had then no love to him, for they evidently had. But they had also low views of him as the Messiah; they had many Jewish prejudices, and they were slow to believe his plain and positive declarations. This is the slight and tender reproof of a friend, meaning manifestly if you had proper love for me, if you had the highest views of my character and work, if you would lay aside your Jewish prejudices, and put entire, implicit confidence in what I say. ¶ *Ye would rejoice.* Instead of grieving, you would rejoice in the completion of the plan which requires me to return to heaven that greater blessings may descend on you by the influence of the Holy Spirit. ¶ *To my Father.* To heaven; to the immediate presence of God, from whom all the blessings of redemption are to descend. ¶ *For my Father is greater than I.* The object of Jesus here is not to compare his own nature with that of the Father, but his condition. Ye would rejoice that I am to leave this state of suffering and humiliation, and resume that glory which I had with the Father before the world was. You ought to rejoice at my exaltation to bliss and glory with the Father. (Prof. Stuart.) The object of this expression is to console the disciples in view of their Master's absence. This he does, by saying that if he goes away, the Holy Spirit will descend, and great success will attend the preaching of the gospel, ch. xvi. 7—10. In the plan of salvation the Father is represented as giving the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the various blessings of the gospel. As the Appointer, the Giver, the Originator, he may be represented as in office superior to the Son and the Holy Spirit. The discourse has no reference manifestly to

fore it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince<sup>4</sup> of this world cometh, and hath<sup>5</sup> nothing in me.

31 But that the world may know

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xii. 31; xvi. 11. Luke xxii. 53. <sup>5</sup> Cor. iv. 4. Eph. ii. 2; vi. 12. 1 John iv. 4. Rev. xii. 9. <sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. iv. 15. 1 John iii. 5.

the nature of Christ, and cannot therefore be adduced to prove that he is not divine. Its whole connexion demands that we interpret it as relating solely to the imparting of the blessings connected with redemption, in which the Son is represented all along as having been sent, or given, and in this respect as sustaining a relation subordinate to the Father.

29. *Before it come to pass.* Before my death, resurrection, and ascension. ¶ *Ye might believe.* You might be confirmed or strengthened in faith by the evidence which I gave that I came from God: and have the power of foretelling future events.

30. *Will not talk much.* The time of my death draws nigh. It occurred the next day. ¶ *The prince of this world.* See Note, ch. xii. 31. ¶ *Cometh.* Satan is represented as approaching him; to try him in his sufferings; and it is commonly supposed that no small part of the pain endured in the garden of Gethsemane was from some dreadful conflict with the great enemy of man. See Luke xxii. 53. Comp. Luke iv. 13. ¶ *Hath nothing in me.* There is in me no principle or feeling that accords with his, and nothing therefore by which he can prevail. Temptation has only power because there are some principles of evil in us which accord with the designs of the tempter, and which may be excited by presenting corresponding objects till our virtue be overcome. Where there is no such principle, temptation has no power. As Jesus had no such evil principle; as he was not at all under the influence of any evil depravity, or attachment to forbidden objects, Satan had nothing in him, and could not prevail. This Jesus knew, but still the trial in its most violent form was admitted.

31. *That the world may know that I love the Father.* That it might not be

A.D. 38.

## CHAPTER XV.

Jerusalem.

that I love the Father; and <sup>1</sup> as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

### CHAPTER XV.

*Christ the true vine, 1—6. His love to*

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xl. 8. Phil. ii. 8.

alleged that his virtue had not been subjected to trial. It was so subjected. "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. iv. 15. He passed through the severest forms of temptation, that it might be seen and known that his holiness was proof to all trial, and that human nature might be so pure as to resist all forms of temptation. This will be the case with all the saints in heaven, and it was the case with Jesus on earth. ¶ *So I do.* In all things he obeyed. And he showed that, in the face of calamities, persecutions, and temptations, he was still disposed to obey his Father. This he did, that the world might know that he loved the Father. So should we bear trials, and resist temptation. And so, through persecution and calamity, should we show that we are actuated by the love of God. ¶ *Arise, let us go hence.* It has been commonly supposed that Jesus and the apostles now rose from the paschal supper and went to the mount of Olives, and that the remainder of the discourse in ch. xv. xvi., together with the prayer in ch. xvii., was delivered while on the way to the garden of Gethsemane. But some have supposed that they merely rose from the table, and that the discourse was finished before they left the room. The former is the more probable opinion. It was now probably towards midnight, and the moon was at the full, and the scene was one, therefore, of great interest and tenderness. Jesus, with a little band, was going forth to die. In the stillness of the night he counselled that little company in regard to their duties and dangers, invoking the protection and blessings of God his Father to attend, to sanctify, and guide them in the arduous labours, the toils, and persecutions, they were yet to endure. Ch. xvii.

### CHAPTER XV.

1. *I am the true vine.* Some have supposed that this discourse was delivered in the room where the Lord's supper was

his disciples, 9—16. *The world hates them, 17—25. The Comforter to come, 26, 27.*

**I** AM the true vine, <sup>2</sup> and my Father is the <sup>3</sup> husbandman.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lv. 2. <sup>3</sup> Cant. viii. 12.

instituted, and that as they had made use of wine, Jesus took occasion from that to say that he was the true vine, and to intimate that his blood was the real wine that was to give strength to the soul. Others have supposed that it was delivered in the temple, the entrance to which is adorned with a golden vine, (Josephus,) and that Jesus took occasion thence to say that he was the true vine. But it is most probable that it was spoken while they were going from the paschal supper to the mount of Olives. Whether it was suggested by the sight of vines by the way, or by the wine of which they had just partaken, cannot now be determined. This comparison was frequent among the Jews, for Palestine abounded in vineyards, and the illustration was very striking. Thus the Jewish people are compared to a vine which God had planted. Psa. lxxx. 8—16. Isa. v. 1—7. Jer. ii. 21. Ezek. xix. 10. Joel i. 7. When Jesus says he was the true vine, perhaps allusion is had to Jer. ii. 21. The word *true* here is used in the sense of real, genuine. He really and truly gives what is emblematically represented by a vine. The point of the comparison, or the meaning of the figure is this: A vine yields proper juice and nourishment to all the branches, whether these be large or small. All the nourishment of each branch and tendril passes through the main stalk, or the stem, that springs from the earth. So Jesus is the source of all real strength and grace to all his disciples. He is their leader and teacher, and imparts to them, as they need, grace and strength to bear the fruits of holiness. ¶ *And my Father is the husbandman.* The word vine-dresser more properly expresses the sense of the original word than *husbandman*. It means one who has the care of a vineyard; whose office it is to nurture, trim, and defend the vine, and who, of course, feels a deep interest in its growth and welfare. Note, Matt. xxi. 33. The figure means that God gave, or appointed his Son to be,

2 Every <sup>1</sup> branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away : and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xv. 13. Luke viii. 13. Heb. vi. 7, 8.

the source of blessings to man ; that all grace descends through him, and that God takes care of all the branches of this vine—that is, of all who are by faith united to the Lord Jesus Christ. In Jesus and in all his church God feels the deepest interest, and it is an object of great solicitude that his church should receive these blessings and bear much fruit.

2. *Every branch in me.* Every one that is a true follower of me, that is united to me by faith, and that truly derives grace and strength from me, as the branch does from the vine. The word *branch* includes all the boughs, and the smallest tendrils that shoot out from the parent stalk. Jesus here says that he sustains the same relation to his disciples that a parent stem does to the branches. But this does not denote any physical or incomprehensible union. It is a union formed by believing on him ; resulting from our feeling our dependence on him and our need of him ; and from embracing him as our Saviour, Redeemer, and Friend. We become united to him in all our interests, and have common feelings, common desires, and a common destiny with him. We seek the same objects ; are willing to encounter the same trials, contempt, persecution, and want ; and are desirous that his God shall be ours, and his eternal abode ours. It is a union of friendship, of love, and of dependence ; a union of weakness with strength, of imperfection with perfection, of a dying nature with a living Saviour, of a lost sinner with an unchanging Friend and Redeemer. It is the most tender and interesting of all relations ; but not more mysterious or more physical than the union of parent and child, of husband and wife, Eph. v. 23, or friend and friend. *¶ That beareth not fruit.* As the vine-dresser will remove all branches that are dead, or that bear no fruit, so will God take from his church all professed Christians who give no evidence by their lives that they are truly united to the Lord Jesus. He here refers to such cases as that of Judas, the unbelieving Jews, the apostatizing disciples, and all false and

every *branch* that <sup>2</sup> beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

<sup>2</sup> Job xvii. 9. Psa. li. 7—12. Prov. iv. 12. Heb. xii. 15. Rev. iii. 12.

merely nominal Christians. (Dr. Adam Clarke.) *¶ He taketh away.* The vine-dresser cuts it off. God removes such in various ways. 1. By the discipline of the church. 2. By suffering them to fall into temptation. 3. By persecution and tribulation ; by the deceitfulness of riches, and by the cares of the world. Matt. xiii. 21, 22. By suffering the man to be placed in such circumstances as Judas, Achan, and Ananias were : such as to show what they were ; to bring their characters fairly out, and to let it be seen that they had no true love to God. 4. By death ; for God has power thus, at any moment, to remove unprofitable branches from the church. *¶ Every branch that beareth fruit.* That is, all true Christians ; for all such bear fruit. To bear fruit is to show by our lives that we are under the influence of the religion of Christ ; and that that religion produces in us its appropriate effects. Gal. v. 22, 23. Note, Matt. vii. 16, 17. It is also to live so as to be useful to others. As a vineyard is worthless unless it bears fruit that may promote the happiness or subsistence of man, so the christian principle would be worthless unless Christians should live so that others may be made holy and happy by their example and labours, and so that the world may be brought to the cross of the Saviour. *¶ He purgeth it.* Or rather he prunes it, or cleanses it by pruning. There is a use of words here, a paronomasia in the original, which cannot be retained in the translation. It may be imperfectly seen by retaining the Greek words, “ Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away, *airei* ; every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, *kathairei* ; now ye are clean, *katharoi*,” &c. The same Greek word, in different forms, is still retained. God purifies all true Christians so that they may be more useful. He takes away that which hindered their usefulness ; teaches them, excites them, makes them more pure in motive and in life. This he does by the regular influences of his Spirit in sanctifying them, purifying their motives, teaching them the

3 Now <sup>1</sup> ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide <sup>2</sup> in me, and I in you. As <sup>3</sup> the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 17. Eph. v. 56. 1 Pet. i. 22.  
<sup>2</sup> 1 John ii. 6. <sup>3</sup> Hos. xiv. 8. Gal. ii. 20.  
 Phil. i. 11.

beauty of holiness, and inducing them to devote themselves more to him. He does it by taking away what opposes their usefulness, however much they may be attached to it, or however painful it is to part with it, as a vine-dresser will often feel himself compelled to lop off a branch that is large, apparently thrifty, and handsome, but which bears no fruit, and which shades or injures those which do. So God often takes away the property of his people, their children, or other idols. He removes the objects which bind their affections, and which render them inactive. He takes away the things around man, as he did the valued gourds of Jonah, Jon. iv. 5—11, so that he may feel his dependence, and live more to the honour of God, and bring forth more proof of humble and active piety.

3. *Now ye are clean.* Still keeping up the figure. (*Katharoi.*) It does not mean that they were perfect, but that they had been under a process of purifying by his instructions all the time he had been with them. He had removed their erroneous notions of the Messiah; he had gradually reclaimed them from their fond and foolish views respecting earthly honours; he had taught them to be willing to forsake all things, and he had so trained and disciplined them that immediately after his death they would be ready to go and bear fruit among all nations to the honour of his name. In addition to this, Judas had been removed from their number, and they were now all true followers of the Saviour. See Note, ch. xiii. 10. ¶ *Through the word.* By means of the teachings of Jesus while he had been with them.

4. *Abide in me.* Remain united to me by a living faith. Live a life of dependence on me, and obey my doctrines, imitate my example, and constantly exercise faith in me. ¶ *And I in you.*

vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for <sup>4</sup> without me ye can do nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Or, severed from me.

That is, if you remain attached to me, I will remain with you, and will teach, guide, and comfort you. This he proceeds to illustrate by a reference to the vine. If the branch should be cut off an instant, it would die and be fruitless. As long as it is in the vine, from the nature of the case, the parent stock imparts its juices, and furnishes a constant circulation of sap adapted to the growth and fruitfulness of the branch. So our piety, if we should be separate from Christ, or if we cease to feel our union to him, and dependence on him, withers and droops. While we are united to him by a living faith, from the nature of the case, strength flows from him to us, and we receive help as we need. Piety then, manifested in good works, in love, and self-denial, is as natural, as easy, as unconstrained, and as lovely as the vine covered with fruitful branches, is at once useful and enticing.

5. *I am the vine.* Ver. 1. ¶ *Without me ye can do nothing.* The expression *without me* denotes the same as *separate from me*. As the branches, if separated from the parent stock, could produce no fruit, but would immediately wither and die, so the apostles and all other Christians, if separate from Christ, could do nothing. The expression is one, therefore, strongly implying dependence. The Son of God was the original source of life. Ch. i. 4. He also, by his work as Mediator, gives life to the world, ch. vi. 33; and it is by the same grace and agency that it is continued in the Christian. We see hence, 1. That to Christ is due all the praise for all the good works the Christian performs. 2. That they will perform good works just in proportion as they feel their dependence on him, and look to him. And, 3. That the reason why others fail of being holy is because they are unwilling to look

6 If <sup>1</sup> a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 12; vii. 13.

to him and seek grace and strength from him who alone is able to give it.

6. *If a man abide not in me.* See ver. 4. If a man is not truly united to him by faith, and does not live with a continual sense of his dependence on him. This doubtless refers to those who are professors of religion, but who have never known anything of true and real connexion with him. *“Is cast forth.”* See Note on ver. 2. Also Matt. vii. 12; xiii. 13. *“Is withered.”* Is dried up. A branch cut off withers. So of a soul unconnected with Christ, however far it may have appeared, and however flourishing when a profession of religion was first made, yet when it is tried, and it is seen that there was no true grace, everything withers and dies. The zeal languishes, the promised love is gone, prayer is neglected, the sanctuary is forsaken, and the soul assumes the appearance of a withered branch reserved for the fire of the last great day. See a beautiful illustration of this in Luke. xvi. *“Men gather them.”* The word *men* is not in the original, and should not have been in the translation. The Greek is, *they gather them*, a form of expression denoting simply they are gathered, with its specifying by whom it is done. From Matt. xiii. 40—42, it seems that it shall be done by the angels. The expression means, as the withered and useless branches of trees are gathered for fuel, so shall it be with all hypocrites and false professors of religion. *“Are burned.”* See Matt. xiii. 42.

7. *My words.* My doctrine: my commandments. *“Abide in you.”* Not only are remembered, but are suffered to remain in you as a living principle, to regulate your affections and life. *“Ye shall ask, &c.”* See ch. xiv. 13. This promise had particular reference to the apostles. It is applicable to other Christians only so far as they are in circumstances similar to the apostles, and only so far as they possess their spirit. We learn from it,

words abide in you, ye <sup>2</sup> shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified: that ye bear much fruit: so shall ye be my disciples.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xvi. 23. Job xxi. 29. Ps. cxviii. 1. Prov. x. 24. <sup>3</sup> Isa. lv. 22. <sup>4</sup> Gen. vi. 21.

that it is only when we keep the commandments of Christ, only when we live by faith in him, and his words are suffered to control our conduct and affections, that our prayers will be heard. Were we perfect in all things, he would always hear us, and we should be kept from making an improper petition. But just so far as men regard iniquity in their heart, the Lord will not hear them. Ps. lxxv. 13.

8. *Herein.* In this, to wit, in your bearing much fruit. *“Glorified.”* Honoured. *“Bear much fruit.”* Abound in good works, are faithful, zealous, humble, devoted, always abounding in the works of the Lord. This honours God, 1. Because it shows the excellence of his law which requires it. 2. Because it shows the power of his gospel, and his grace, that can overcome the evil propensities of the heart, and produce it. 3. Because the Christian is restored to the divine image, and it shows how excellent is the character after which they are formed. They imitate God, and the world sees that the whole tendency of the divine administration and character is to make man holy, to produce that which is lovely, and true, and honest, and of good report. Compare Matt. vii. 20. Phil. iv. 8. *“So.”* That is, in doing this. *“Shall ye be my disciples.”* This is a true test of character. It is not by profession, but it is by a holy life, that the character is tried. This is a test which it is easy to apply, and one which decides the case. It is worthy of remark, that the Saviour says those who bear much fruit are they who are his disciples. The design and tendency of his religion is to excite men to do much good, and to call forth all their strength and time, and talents, in the work for which the Saviour laid down his life. Nor should any one take comfort in the belief that he is a Christian who does not aim to do much good, and who does not devote to God all that he has, in an honest effort to glorify his name, and to benefit



9 As the Father hath loved me,<sup>1</sup> so have I loved you : continue ye in my love.

10 If <sup>2</sup> ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love ;

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 23, 26. Eph. iii. 18, 19. Rev. i. 5.  
<sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 21, 23. 1 Cor. vii. 19. 1 John ii. 5 ;  
 iii. 21—24 ; v. 3. Rev. xxii. 14.

a dying world. The apostles obeyed this command of the Saviour, and went forth preaching the gospel everywhere, and aiming to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth. And the time has come for Christians to imitate their example, and strive to send the news of salvation to the ends of the earth.

9. *As the Father hath loved me.* The love of the Father towards his only begotten Son is the highest affection of which we can conceive. Compare Matt. iii. 17 ; xvii. 5. It is the love of God towards his co-equal Son, who is like him in all things ; who always pleased him, and who was willing to endure the greatest sacrifices and toils to accomplish his purpose of mercy. Yet this love is adduced to illustrate the tender affection which the Lord Jesus has for all his friends. ¶ *So have I loved you.* Not to the same degree, for this was impossible, but with the same kind of love ; deep, tender, unchanging ; love prompting to self-denials, toils, and sacrifices to secure their welfare. ¶ *Continue ye.* The reason which he gives for their doing this is the strength of the love which he had shown for them. His love was so great for them that he was about to lay down his life. This constitutes a strong reason why we should continue in his love. 1. Because the love which he shows for us is unchanging. 2. It is the love of our best friend ; love whose strength was expressed by toils, and groans, and blood. 3. As he is unchanging in the character and strength of his affection, so should we be. Thus only can we properly express our gratitude, thus only show that we are his true friends. 4. Our happiness here, and for ever, depends altogether on our continuing in the love of Christ. We have no source of permanent joy but in that love. ¶ *In my love.* In love to me. Thus it is expressed in the Greek in the next verse. The connexion also demands that we

even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that <sup>3</sup> your joy might be full.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 24 ; xvii. 13.

understand it of our love to him, and not of his love to us. The latter cannot be the subject of a command. The former may. See also Luke xi. 42. 1 John ii. 5. Jude 21.

10. See ch. xiv. 23, 24.

11. *These things.* The discourse in this and the previous chapter. This discourse was designed to comfort them by the promise of the Holy Spirit, and of eternal life, and to direct them in the discharge of their duty. ¶ *My joy.* This expression probably denotes the happiness which Jesus had, and would continue to have, by their obedience, love, and fidelity. Their obedience was to him a source of joy. It was that which he sought, and for which he had laboured. He now clearly taught them the path of duty, and encouraged them to persevere, notwithstanding he was about to leave them. If they obeyed him, it would continue to be a source of joy to him. Christ rejoices in the obedience of all his friends, and though his happiness is not dependent on them, yet their fidelity is an object which he desires, and in which he finds delight. The same sentiment is expressed in ch. xvii. 13. ¶ *Your joy might be full.* That you might be freed from your despondency and grief at my departure. That you might see the reason why I leave you, be comforted by the Holy Spirit, and be sustained in the arduous trials of your ministry. See 1 John. i. 4. 2 John 12. This promise of the Saviour was abundantly fulfilled. The apostles, with great frequency, speak of the fulness of their joy ; joy produced in just the manner promised by the Saviour, by the presence of the Holy Spirit ; and it showed his great love that he promised such joy ; his infinite knowledge, that in the midst of their many trials and persecutions, he knew that they would possess it ; and the glorious power and loveliness of his gospel, that it could impart such

12 This <sup>1</sup> is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater <sup>2</sup> love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye <sup>3</sup> are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xiii. 34.    <sup>2</sup> Rom. v. 7, 8.    <sup>3</sup> Ver. 16.

joy, amid so many tribulations. See instances of this joy in Acts xiii. 52. Rom. v. 11; xiv. 17. 2 Cor. ii. 3; vii. 4. Gal. v. 22. 1 Thes. i. 6; ii. 19, 20; iii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 8.

12. *This is my commandment.* The peculiar law of Christianity, called hence the new commandment. See Note, ch. xiii. 34. ¶ *As I have loved you.* That is, with the same tender affection, willing to endure trials, to practise self-denials, and, if need be, to lay down your lives for each other. 1 John iii. 16.

13. *Greater love hath, &c.* No higher expression of love could be given. Life is our most valuable possession, and when a man is willing to lay that down for his friends, or country, it shows the utmost extent of love. Even this love for friends has been rarely witnessed. A very few cases, like that of Damon and Pythias, have occurred where a man was willing to save the life of his friend by giving his own. It greatly enhances the love of Christ, that while the instances of those who have been willing to die for friends have been so rare, he was willing to die for enemies, bitter foes, who rejected his reign, persecuted him, reviled him, scorned him, and sought his life. Rom. v. 6, 10. 1 John iv. 10. It also shows us the extent of his love that he gave himself up, not to common sufferings, but to the most bitter, painful, and protracted that man had devised, not for himself, not for friends, but for a thoughtless and unbelieving world.

"O Lamb of God, was ever pain,  
Was ever LOVE like thine!"

15. *I call you not servants.* This had been the common title by which he addressed them. Ch. xii. 26; xiii. 13. Matt. x. 24, 25. But he had also before this on one occasion called them friends, Luke xii. 4, and on one occasion after

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you <sup>4</sup> friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. <sup>5</sup>

16 Ye <sup>6</sup> have not chosen me, but

<sup>4</sup> Jas. ii. 23.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. viii. 26; xvii. 6. Om. xviii. 17-19.    <sup>6</sup> 1 John iv. 10, 19.

this he called them servants, Ch. xv. 20. He here means that the ordinary title by which he would henceforth address them would be that of friends. ¶ *The servant knoweth not, &c.* He receives the command of his master without knowing the reason why this or that thing is ordered. It is one of the conditions of slavery not to be let into the counsels and plans of the master. It is the privilege of friendship to be made acquainted with the plans, wishes, and wants of the friend. This proof of friendship, Jesus had given them by making them acquainted with the reasons why he was about to leave them, and with his secret wishes in regard to them. As he had given them this proof of friendship, it was proper that he should not withhold from them the title of friends. ¶ *His lord.* His master. ¶ *I have called you friends.* I have given you the name of friends. He does not mean that the usual appellation which he had given them had been that of friends, but that such was the title which he had now given them. ¶ *For all things, &c.* The reason why he called them friends was, that he had now treated them as friends. He had opened to them his mind, made known his plans, acquainted them with the design of his coming, his death, his resurrection, and ascension; and having thus given them the clearest proof of friendship, it was proper that he should give them the name. ¶ *That I have heard, &c.* Jesus frequently represents himself as commissioned, or sent by God, to accomplish an important work, and as being instructed by him in regard to the nature of that work. See Note, ch. i. 30. By what he had heard of the Father, he doubtless refers to the design of God in his coming, and his death. This he had made known to them.

16. *Ye have not chosen me.* The word

I have chosen you, and I ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that<sup>2</sup> whatso-

ever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These<sup>3</sup> things I command you, that ye love one another.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. ii. 10.    <sup>2</sup> Ver. 7; ch. xiv. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Ver. 12.

here translated *chosen* is that from which is derived the word elect, and means the same thing. It is frequently thus translated. Matt. xxiv. 22, 24, 31. Mark xiii. 20. Col. iii. 12. It refers, here, doubtless, to his choosing or electing them to be apostles. He says that it was not because they had chosen him to be their teacher and guide, but because he had designated them to be his apostles. See ch. vi. 70; also Matt. iv. 18—22. He thus shows them that his love for them was pure and disinterested, that it commenced when they had no affection for him, that it was not a matter of obligation on his part; and that therefore it placed them under more tender and sacred obligations to be entirely devoted to his service. The same may be said of all who are endowed with talents of any kind, or raised to any office in the church or the state. It is not that they have originated these talents, or laid God under obligation. What they have they owe to his sovereign goodness, and they are bound to devote all to his service. Equally true is this of all Christians. It was not that by nature they were more inclined than others to seek God, or that they had any native goodness to recommend them to him, but it was because he graciously inclined them by his Holy Spirit to seek him; because, in the language of the episcopal and methodist articles of religion, "The grace of Christ prevented them;" that is, went before them, commenced the work of their personal salvation, and thus God, in sovereign mercy, chose them as his own. Whatever Christians, then, possess, they owe to God; and by the most tender and sacred ties they are bound to be his servants. ¶ *I have chosen you.* To be apostles. Yet all whom he now addressed were true disciples. Judas left them; and when Jesus says he had chosen them to bear fruit, it may mean also that he had "chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

<sup>2</sup> Thess. ii. 13. ¶ *Ordained you.* Lite-

rally, I have placed you, appointed you, set you apart. It does not mean that he had done this by any formal public act of the imposition of hands, as we now use the word, but that he had designated or appointed them to this work. Matt. x. 1—5. Luke vi. 13—16.

¶ *Bring forth fruit.* That you should be rich in good works; faithful and successful in spreading my gospel. This was the great business to which they were set apart, and this they faithfully accomplished. It may be added that this is the great end for which Christians are chosen. It is not to be idle, or useless, or simply to seek enjoyment. It is to do good, and to spread as far as possible the rich temporal and spiritual blessings which the gospel is fitted to confer on mankind. ¶ *Your fruit should remain.* This probably means,

1. That the effect of their labours should be permanent on mankind. Their efforts were not to be like those of false teachers, the result of whose labours soon vanish away, Acts v. 38, 39; but their gospel was to spread, was to take a deep and permanent hold on men, and was ultimately to fill the world. Matt. xvi. 18. The Saviour knew this, and never was a prediction more cheering for man, or more certain in its fulfilment. 2. There is included, also, in this declaration, the idea that their labours were to be unremitted. They were sent forth to be diligent in their work, and untiring in their efforts to spread the gospel, until the day of their death. Thus their fruit, the continued product or growth of religion in their souls, was to remain, or to be continually produced, until God should call them from their work. The Christian, and especially the Christian minister, is devoted to the Saviour for life. He is to toil, without intermission, and without being weary of his work, till God shall call him home. The Saviour never called a disciple to serve him merely a part of his life; nor to feel himself at liberty to relax his endeavours; nor to suppose himself to be a Christian when his religion

18 If <sup>1</sup> the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it *hated* you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own : but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore <sup>2</sup> the world hateth you.

20 Remember <sup>3</sup> the word that I said unto you, The servant is not

greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you ; if <sup>4</sup> they have kept my saying, they will keep your's also.

21 But <sup>5</sup> all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 If <sup>6</sup> I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 1, 3.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. xvii. 14.    <sup>3</sup> Ch. xiii. 16.    <sup>4</sup> Matt. x. 24.    <sup>5</sup> Luke vi. 40.

<sup>6</sup> Ezek. iii. 7.    <sup>7</sup> Ch. xvi. 3.    <sup>8</sup> Matt. x. 22 ; xxiv. 9.    <sup>9</sup> Ch. ix. 41.

produced no fruit in his life. He that enlists under the banners of the Son of God, does it for life. He that expects or desires to grow weary and cease to serve him, has never yet put on the Christian armour, or known anything of the grace of God. See Luke ix. 62. ¶ *That whosoever*, &c. See ver. 7.

18. *If the world hate you.* The friendship of the world they were not to expect ; but they were not to be deterred from their work by their hatred. They had seen the example of Jesus. No opposition of the proud, the wealthy, the learned, or the men of power ; no persecution or jibes, had deterred him from his work. Remembering this, and having his example steadily in the eye, they were to labour not less because wicked men should oppose and deride them. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his lord. Matt. x. 25.

19. *If ye were of the world.* If you were actuated by the principles of the world. If, like them, you were vain, earthly, sensual, given to pleasure, wealth, ambition, they would not oppose you. ¶ *Because ye are not of the world.* Because you are influenced by different principles from men of the world. You are actuated by the love of God and holiness ; they by the love of sin. ¶ *I have chosen you out of the world.* I have, by choosing you to be my followers, separated you from their society, and placed you under the government of my holy laws. ¶ *Therefore*, &c. A Christian may esteem it as one evidence of his piety that he is hated by wicked men. Often, most decided evidence is given that a man is the friend of God, by the opposition excited against him by the profane,

the sabbath-breaker, and the dissolute. Chap. vii. 7. 1 John iii. 13.

20. *Remember the word that I said*, &c. At their first appointment to the apostolic office. See Matt. x. 24, 25.

21. *My name's sake.* On my account. Because you are my followers, and possess my spirit. Note, ch. xiv. 13. ¶ *Because they know me not*, &c. They will not believe that God has sent me. They do not understand his character, his justice, or his law, as to see that it was fit that he should send his Son to die. They are so opposed to it, so filled with pride and opposition to a plan of salvation that is so humbling to men, as to be resolved not to believe it ; and thus they persecute me, and will also persecute you.

22. *And spoken unto them.* Declared unto them the will of God, and made known his requirements. Jesus had not less certainly shown by his own arguments that he was the Messiah than by his miracles. By both these kinds of proof their guilt was to be measured. See ver. 26. No small part of the gospel of John consists of arguments used by the Saviour to convince the Jews that he came from God. He here says, if he had not used these arguments, and proved to them his divine mission, they had not had sin. ¶ *Had not had sin.* This is evidently to be understood of the particular sin of persecuting and rejecting him. Of this he was speaking ; and though, if he had not come, they would have been guilty of many other sins, yet of this, their great crowning sin, they would not have been guilty. We may understand this, then, as teaching, 1. That they would not have been guilty of this kind of sin. They would not have been chargeable with

had sin : but <sup>1</sup> now they have no <sup>2</sup> cloke for their sin.

23 He hath hateth me hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works <sup>3</sup> which none other man did, they had not had sin : but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

<sup>1</sup> Jas. iv. 17.    <sup>2</sup> Or, excuse.    <sup>3</sup> Ch. vii. 31.

rejecting the signal grace of God, if Jesus had not come and made an offer of mercy to them. 2. They would not have been guilty of the same degree of sin. The rejection of the Messiah was the crowning act of rebellion which brought down the vengeance of God, and led on their peculiar national calamities. By way of eminence, therefore, this might be called the sin, the peculiar sin of their age and nation. Compare Matt. xxiii. 34—39; xxvii. 25. And this shows us, what is so often taught in the scriptures, that our guilt will be in proportion to the light that we possess, and the mercies that we reject. Matt. xi. 20—24. Luke xii. 47, 48. If it was such a crime to reject the Saviour then, it is a crime now; and if the rejection of the Son of God brought such calamities on the Jewish nation, the same rejection will involve the sinner now in woe, and vengeance, and despair. ¶ *No cloke.* No covering; no excuse. The proof has been so clear that they cannot plead ignorance; it has been so often presented that they cannot allege that they had no opportunity of knowing it. It is still so with all sinners.

23. *He that hateth me, &c.* To show them this was no slight crime, he reminds them that a rejection of himself is also a rejection of God. Such is the union between the Father and the Son, that no one can hate the one without also hating the other. See ch. v. 19, 20; xiv. 7, 9.

24. *The works which none other man did.* The miracles of Jesus surpassed those of Moses and the prophets: 1. In their number. He healed great multitudes, and no small part of his life was occupied in doing good by miraculous power. 2. In their nature. They involved a greater exertion of power. He healed all forms of disease. He showed

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They <sup>4</sup> hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter <sup>5</sup> is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he <sup>6</sup> shall testify of me:

<sup>4</sup> Psa. xxxv. 19; lxi. 4.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiv. 17.  
<sup>6</sup> 1 John v. 6.

that his power was superior to all kinds of pain. He raised Lazarus after he had been four days dead. He probably refers also to the fact that he had performed miracles of a different kind from all the prophets. 3. He did all this by his own power; Moses and the prophets by the invoked power of God. Jesus spake, and it was done; showing that he had power of himself to do more than all the ancient prophets had done. It may be added that his miracles were done in a short time. They were constant, rapid, continued in all places. Wherever he was, he showed that he had this power; and in the short space of three years and a half, it is probable that he wrought more miracles than are recorded of Moses and Elijah, and all the prophets put together.

25. *In their law.* Psa. xxxv. 19. All the Old Testament was sometimes called the law. The meaning here is, that the same thing happened to him that happened to the psalmist. The same words that David used respecting his enemies, would express also the conduct of the Jews, and their treatment of Jesus. In both cases it was without cause. Jesus had broken no law, he had done no injury to his country, or to any individual. It is still true that sinners hate him in the same way. He injures no one, but, amidst all their hatred, he seeks their welfare; and while they reject him in a manner for which they can give no reason in the day of judgment, he still follows them with mercies, and entreats them to return to him. Who has ever had any reason to hate the Lord Jesus? What injury has he ever done to any one of the human race? What evil has he ever said or thought of any one of them? What cause or reason had the Jews for putting him to death? What reason has the sin-

27 And <sup>1</sup> ye also shall bear witness, because <sup>2</sup> ye have been with me from the beginning.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*The disciples forewarned and comforted, 1—6. The office and work of the Holy Ghost, 7—14. The disciples' anxiety,*

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 48. Acts II. 32; iv. 20, 33. <sup>2</sup> Pet. I. 10. <sup>3</sup> 1 John I. 2.

ner for hating him now? What reason for neglecting him! No one can give a reason for it that shall satisfy his own conscience; none that has the least show of plausibility. Yet no being on earth has ever been more hated, despised, or neglected: and in every instance it has been without a cause. Reader, do you hate him? If so, I ask you why? Wherein has he injured you? Or why should you think or speak reproachfully of the benevolent and pure Redeemer?

27. *Ye shall bear witness.* You shall be witnesses to the world to urge on them the evidences that the Lord Jesus was the Messiah. *¶ Have been with me.* They had for more than three years seen his works, and were therefore qualified to bear witness of his character and doctrines. *¶ From the beginning.* From his entrance on the public work of the ministry. Matt. iv. 17—22. Compare Acts i. 21, 22.

## CHAPTER XVI.

1. *These things.* The things spoken in the two previous chapters, promising them divine aid, and directing them in the path of duty. *¶ Be offended.* For the meaning of the word *offend* see Note, Matt. v. 23. It means here the same as to stumble or fall, that is, to apostatize. Christ proceeds immediately to tell them what he had often apprized them of, that they would be subject to great persecutions and trials. He was also himself about to be removed by death. They were to go into an unfriendly world. All these things were in themselves greatly fitted to shake their faith, and induce them to apostatize. Compare Luke xxiv. 21. If they had not been apprized of this, if they had not known why Jesus was about to die, and if they had not been encouraged with the promised aid of the Holy Ghost, they would have sunk

15—22. *Their anxiety to be removed, and their prayer to be heard, 23—33.*

**T**HESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: <sup>3</sup> yea, the time cometh,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ix. 23, 34; xii. 42. Luke vi. 22. 1 Cor. iv. 13.

under these trials, and forsaken him and his cause. And we may hence learn, 1. That if Christians were left to themselves they would fall and perish. 2. That God affords means and helps beforehand to keep them in the path of duty. 3. That the instructions of the Bible, and the help of the Holy Spirit, are all granted to keep them from apostasy. 4. That Jesus, beforehand, secured the fidelity, and made certain the continuance in faith, of his apostles, seeing all their dangers, and knowing all their enemies. And, in like manner, we should be persuaded that "he is able to keep that which we commit to him against that day." 2 Tim. i. 12.

2. *Out of the synagogues.* See Note, ch. ix. 22. They would excommunicate them from their religious assemblies. This was often done. Compare Acts vi. 12, 14; ix. 23, 24; xvii. 5; xxi. 27—31.

*¶ Whosoever killeth you.* This refers principally to the Jews. It is also true of the Gentiles, that in their persecution of Christians they supposed they were rendering acceptable service to their gods.

*¶ God service.* The Jews who persecuted the apostles regarded them as blasphemers, and as seeking to overthrow the temple service, and the system of religion which God had established. Thus they supposed they were rendering service to God in putting them to death. Acts vi. 13, 14; xxi. 28—31. Sinners, especially hypocrites, often cloak enormous crimes under the pretence of great zeal for religion. Men often suppose, or profess to suppose, that they are rendering God service when they persecute others; and under the pretence of great zeal for truth and purity, evince all possible bigotry, pride, malice, and uncharitableness. The people of God have suffered most from those who have been conscientious persecutors; and some of the most

that <sup>1</sup> whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

3 And <sup>2</sup> these things will they do unto you, because <sup>3</sup> they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxvi. 9-11. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xv. 21. <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 8. 1 Tim. i. 13.

malignant foes which true Christians have ever had have been in the church, and have been professed ministers of the gospel, persecuting them under pretence of great zeal for the cause of purity and religion. It is no evidence of piety that a man is full of zeal against those whom he supposes to be heretics. And it is one of the best proofs that a man knows nothing of the religion of Jesus, when he is eminent for self-conceit in his own views of orthodoxy, and firmly fixed in the opinion that all who differ from him and his sect must of course be wrong.

3. See ch. xv. 21.

4. *These things.* These things which are about to happen. Ver. 1, 2. Jesus had foretold them that they would take place. ¶ *Ye may remember, &c.* By calling to mind that he had foretold these things, they would perceive that he was omniscient, and would remember also the consolations which he had afforded them, and the instructions which he had given them. Had these calamities come upon them without their having been foretold, their faith might have failed; they might have been tempted to suppose that Jesus was not aware of them, and of course that he was not the Messiah. God does not suffer his people to fall into trials without giving them sufficient warning, and without giving all the grace that is needful to bear them. ¶ *At the beginning.* In the early part of the ministry of Jesus. The expression *these things*, here, refers probably to all the topics contained in these chapters. In the early part of his ministry, he had forewarned them of calamities and persecutions, Matt. v. 10-12; 16; ix. 15; but he had not so fully acquainted them with the nature, and design, and sources, of their trials; he had

unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.<sup>4</sup>

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?<sup>5</sup>

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow<sup>6</sup> hath filled your heart.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xvii. 12, 13. Matt. ix. 15. Mark ii. 19. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xiii. 35; xiv. 4-6. <sup>6</sup> Ver. 21; ch. xiv. 1, 27; xx. 11-15.

not so fully apprised them of the fact, the circumstances, and the object, of his death, and of his ascension to heaven; he had not revealed to them so clearly that the Holy Spirit would descend, and sanctify, and guide them; and especially he had not, in one continued discourse, grouped all these things together, and placed their sorrows and consolations so fully before their minds. All these are included, it is supposed, in the expression, *these things*. ¶ *Because I was with you.* This is the reason which he gives why he had not at first made known to them clearly the certainty of their calamities and their joys. And it implies, 1. That it was not needful to do this at once, as he was to be with them for more than three years, and could have abundant opportunity gradually to teach these things, and to prepare them for the more full announcement when he was about to leave them. 2. That while he was with them he would go before them, and the weight of calamities would fall on him, and consequently they did not so much then need the presence and aid of the Holy Spirit as they would when he was gone. And, 3. That his presence was to them what the presence of the Holy Spirit would be after his death, ver. 7. He could teach them all needful truth. He could console and guide them. Now that he was to leave them, he fully apprised them of what was before them, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit to do for them what he had done when with them.

5, 6. *Now I go my way.* Now I am about to die and leave you, and it is proper to announce all these things to you. ¶ *None of you asketh me, &c.* They gave themselves up to grief instead of inquiring why he was about to leave them. Had they made the inquiry, he

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: <sup>1</sup> for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto

you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove <sup>2</sup> the world of sin, and

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 50—52; xiv. 3, 28. Rom. viii. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Or, convince; ch. viii. 9—48. 1 Cor. xiv. 24. Acts ii. 37.

was ready to answer them, and to comfort them. When we are afflicted, we should not yield ourselves to excessive grief. We should inquire why it is that God thus tries us; and we should never doubt that if we come to him, and spread out our sorrows before him, he will give us consolation.

7. *It is expedient for you, &c.* The reason why it was expedient for them that he should go away, he states to be, that in this way only would the Comforter be granted to them. Still it may be asked why the presence of the Holy Spirit was more valuable to them than that of the Saviour himself? To this it may be answered, 1. That by his departure, his death, and ascension, by having these great facts before their eyes, they would be led by the Holy Spirit to see more fully the design of his coming than they would by his presence. While he was with them, notwithstanding the plainest teaching, their minds were filled with prejudice and error. They still adhered to the expectation of a temporal kingdom, and were unwilling to believe that he was to die. When he had actually left them, they could no longer doubt on the subject, and were prepared to understand why he came. And thus it was. See the Acts of the Apostles everywhere. It is often needful that God should visit us with severe affliction before our pride will be humbled, and we are willing to understand the plainest truths. 2. While on the earth the Lord Jesus could be bodily present but in one place at one time. Yet, in order to secure the great design of saving men, it was needful that there should be some agent who should be in all places, who could attend all ministers, and who could, at the same time, apply the work of Christ to men in all parts of the earth. 3. It was an evident arrangement in the great plan of redemption, that each of the persons of the Trinity should perform a part. As it was not the work of the Spirit to make an atonement, so it was not the work of the

Saviour to apply it. And until the Lord Jesus had performed this great work, the way was not open for the Holy Spirit to descend to perform his part of the great plan. Yet, when the Saviour had completed his portion of the work, and had left the earth, the Spirit would carry forward the same plan, and apply it to men. 4. It was to be expected that far more signal success would attend the preaching of the gospel when the atonement was actually made, than before. It was the office of the Spirit to carry forward the work only when the Saviour had died and ascended. And this was actually the case. See Acts ii. Hence it was expedient that the Lord Jesus should go away, that the Spirit might descend and apply the work to sinners. The departure of the Lord Jesus was to the apostles a source of deep affliction. But had they seen the whole case, they would not have been thus afflicted. So God often takes away from us one blessing that he may bestow a greater. All affliction, if received in a proper manner, is of this description. And could the afflicted people of God always see the whole case as God sees it, they would think and feel as he does, that it was best for them to be thus afflicted. ¶ *It is expedient.* It is better for you. ¶ *The Comforter.* Note, ch. xiv. 16.

8. *He will reprove.* The word translated *reprove* means commonly to demonstrate by argument, to prove, to persuade any one to do a thing by presenting reasons. It hence means also to convince of anything, and particularly to convince of crime. This is its meaning here. He will convince, or convict the world of sin. That is, he will so apply the truths of God to men's own minds, as to convince them by fair and sufficient arguments that they are sinners. This is the nature of conviction always. ¶ *The world.* Sinners. The men of the world. All men are by nature sinners; and the term *the world* may be applied to them all. Ch. i. 10; xii. 31. 1 John v.



of righteousness, and of judgment :

9 Of sin, <sup>1</sup> because they believe not on me ;

10 Of righteousness, <sup>2</sup> because I

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii. 20 ; vii. 9.  
Rom. i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xlii. 21.

9. *Of sin.* The first thing specified, of which the world would be convinced, is sin. Sin, in general, is any violation of a law of God. But the particular sin of which men are here said to be convinced is that of rejecting the Lord Jesus. This is placed first, and is deemed the sin of chief magnitude, as it is the principal one of which men are guilty. This was particularly true of the Jews who had rejected him and crucified him. And it was the great crime which, when brought home to their consciences by the preaching of the apostles, overwhelmed them with confusion, and filled their hearts with remorse. It was their rejection of the Son of God that was made the great truth that was instrumental of their conversion. Acts ii. 22, 23, 37 ; iii. 13—15 ; iv. 10, 26—28. Compare ver. 31—33. It is also true of other sinners. Sinners, when awakened, often feel that it has been the great crowning sin of their lives, that they have rejected the tender mercy of God, and trampled on the blood of his Son ; and that they have for months and years refused to submit to him, saying that they would not have him to reign over them. Thus is fulfilled what is spoken by Zechariah, Zech. xii. 10. Throughout the New Testament this is regarded as the sin that is pre-eminently offensive to God, and which, if unrepented of, will certainly lead to perdition. Ch. iii. 36. Mark xvi. 16. Hence it is placed first in those sins of which the Spirit will convince men ; and hence, if we have not yet been brought to see our guilt in rejecting God's tender mercy through his Son, we are yet in the gall of bitterness, and under the bond of iniquity.

10. *Of righteousness.* This seems clearly to refer to the righteousness or innocence of Jesus himself. He was now persecuted. He was soon to be arraigned on heavy charges, and condemned by the highest authority of the nation as guilty. Yet, though condemned, he says that the Holy Spirit would descend and convince

go to my Father, and ye see me no more.

11 Of judgment, <sup>2</sup> because <sup>3</sup> the prince of this world is judged.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 2. Rev. xx. 12, 13.  
<sup>3</sup> Ch. xii. 31.

the world that he was innocent. ¶ *Because I go to my Father.* That is, the amazing miracle of his resurrection and ascension to God would be a demonstration of his innocence that would satisfy the Jews and Gentiles. God would not raise up an impostor. If he had been truly guilty, as the Jews who condemned him pretended, God would not have set his seal to the imposture by raising him from the dead. But when he did raise him up and exalt him to his own right hand, he gave his attestation to his innocence ; he showed that he approved his work, and gave evidence conclusive that Jesus was sent from God. To this proof of the innocence of Jesus the apostles often refer. Acts ii. 22—24 ; xvii. 31. Rom. i. 4. 1 Cor. xv. 14—20. 1 Tim. iii. 16. This same proof of the innocence or righteousness of the Saviour is as satisfactory now as it was then. One of the deepest feelings which an awakened sinner has, is his conviction of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He sees that he is holy ; that his own opposition to him has been unprovoked, unjust, and base ; and it is this which so often overwhelms his soul with the conviction of his own unworthiness, and with earnest desires to obtain a better righteousness than his own. ¶ *And ye see me no more.* That is, he was to be taken away from them, and they would not see him till his return to judgment. Yet this source of grief to them would be the means of establishing his religion, and greatly blessing others.

11. *Of judgment.* That God is just, and will execute judgment. This is proved by what he immediately states. ¶ *The prince of this world.* Satan. See Note, ch. xii. 31. The death of Christ was a judgment, or a condemnation of Satan. In this struggle Jesus gained the victory, and subdued the great enemy of man. This proves that God will execute judgment or justice on all his foes. If he vanquished his great enemy who had so long triumphed in this world, he will sub-

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but <sup>1</sup> ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he <sup>2</sup> will guide

<sup>1</sup> Mark iv. 33. 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2. Heb. v. 11-14. Ch. xiv. 26. 1 Cor. ii. 10-13. Eph. iv. 7-15. 1 John ii. 20, 27.

due all others in due time. All sinners in like manner may expect to be condemned. Of this great truth Jesus says the Holy Spirit will convince men. God showed himself to be just in subduing his great enemy. He showed that he was resolved to vanquish his foes, and that all his enemies in like manner must be subdued. This is deeply felt by the convicted sinner. He knows that he is guilty. He learns that God is just. He fears that he will condemn him, and trembles in the apprehension of approaching condemnation. From this state of alarm there is no refuge but to flee to Him who subdued the great enemy of man, and who is able to deliver him from the vengeance due to his sins. Convinced then of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and of his ability and willingness to save him, he flees to his cross, and seeks in him a refuge from the coming storm of wrath.

In these verses we have a condensed and most striking view of the work of the Holy Spirit. These three things comprise the whole of his agency in the conversion of sinful men. And in the accomplishment of this work, he still awakens, convinces, and renews. He attends the preaching of the gospel, and blesses the means of grace, and manifests his power in revivals of religion. He thus imparts to man the blessings purchased by the death of Jesus; carries forward and extends the same plan of mercy, and will yet apply it to all the kingdoms and tribes of men. Have we ever felt his power, and been brought by his influence to mourn over our sins, and seek the mercy of a dying Saviour? §§

12. *Yet many things to say, &c.* There were many things pertaining to the work of the Spirit and the establishment of religion which might be said. Jesus had given them the outline; he had presented to them the great doctrines of the system, but he had not gone into details. These were things which they could not then

you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak. and he <sup>3</sup> will shew you things to come.

<sup>2</sup> Joel ii. 28. Acts ii. 17, 18; xi. 28; xii. 9-11. Rev. i. 1, 12.

bear. They were still full of jewish prejudices, and were not prepared for a full development of his plans. Probably he refers here to the great changes which were to take place in the jewish system: the abolition of sacrifices and the priesthood, the change of the sabbath, the rejection of the jewish nation, &c. For these doctrines they were not prepared, but they would, in due time, be taught them by the Holy Spirit.

13. *The Spirit of truth.* So called because he would teach them all needful truth. ¶ *Will guide you into all truth.* That is, truth which pertained to the establishment of the Christian system, which they were not then prepared to hear. We may here remark that this is a full promise that they would be inspired and guided in founding the new church. And we may observe that the plan of the Saviour was replete with wisdom. Though they had been long with him, yet they were not prepared then to hear of the changes that were to occur. But his death would open their eyes, and the Holy Spirit, making use of the striking and impressive scenes of his death and ascension, would carry forward with vast rapidity their views of the nature of the christian scheme. Perhaps in the few days that elapsed of which we have a record in the first and second chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, they learned more of the true nature of the christian plan than they would have done in months or years even under the teaching of Jesus himself. The more we study the plan of Christ, the more shall we admire the profound wisdom of the christian scheme, and see that it was eminently fitted to the great design of its Founder: to introduce it in such a manner as to make on man the deepest impression of its wisdom and its truth. ¶ *Not speak of himself.* Not as prompted by himself. He shall declare what is communicated to him. Note, ch. vi. 18. ¶ *Whosoever he*

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye

shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

19 Now Jesus knew <sup>1</sup> that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A <sup>2</sup> little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye <sup>3</sup> shall weep and lament,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. ii. 24, 25. <sup>2</sup> Ver. 16; ch. vii. 33; xlii. 33; xiv. 18. <sup>3</sup> Luke xxiv. 17, 21.

*shall hear.* What he shall receive of the Father and the Son, represented by *hearing*, because in this way instruction is commonly received. See Note, ch. v. 30. ¶ *Things to come.* Probably this means the meaning of things which were to take place after the time when he was speaking to them, to wit, the design of his death and the nature of the changes which were to take place in the Jewish nation. It is also true that the apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit to predict future events which would take place in the church and the world. See Acts xi. 28; xx. 29; xxi. 11; 1 Tim. iv. 1—3; 2 Tim. iii; 2 Pet. i. 14; and the whole book of Revelation.

14. *Shall glorify me.* Shall honour me. The nature of his influence shall be such as to exalt my character and work in view of the mind. ¶ *Shall receive of mine.* Literally, "shall take of, or from me." He shall receive his commission and instructions as an ambassador from me, to do my will and complete my work. ¶ *Shall show it.* Shall announce or communicate it to you. This is always the work of the Spirit. All serious impressions produced by him lead to the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. xii. 3. And by this we may easily test our feelings. If we have been truly convicted of sin, and renewed by the Holy Ghost, the tendency of all his influences has been to lead us to the Saviour, to show us our need of him, to reveal to us the loveliness of his character, and the fitness of his work to our

wants, and to incline us to cast our eternal interests on his almighty arm, and commit all to his hands.

15. *All things, &c.* See Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18. No one could have said this who was not equal with the Father. The union was so intimate, though mysterious, that it might with propriety be said that whatever was done in relation to the Son was also done in regard to the Father. See ch. xiv. 9.

16. *A little while.* His death would occur in a short time. It took place the next day. See ch. xiv. 19. ¶ *Ye shall not see me.* That is, he would be concealed from their view in the tomb. ¶ *And again a little while.* After three days he would rise again, and appear to their view. ¶ *Because I go, &c.* Because it is a part of the plan that I should ascend to God, it is necessary that I should rise from the grave, and then you will see me, and have evidence that I am still your friend. Compare ch. vii. 33. Here are three important events foretold for the consolation of the disciples. Yet they were stated in such a manner that, in their circumstances and with their prejudices, it appeared difficult to understand him.

20. *Ye shall weep, &c.* At my crucifixion, sufferings, and death. Compare Luke xxiii. 27. ¶ *The world.* Wicked men. The term *world* is frequently used in this sense. See ver. 8. It refers particularly here to the Jews who sought his death, and who would rejoice that their

but the world shall rejoice : and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

21 A <sup>1</sup> woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come : but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And <sup>2</sup> ye now therefore have

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxi. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 6.

object was obtained. ¶ *Shall be turned into joy.* You will not only rejoice at my resurrection, but even my death, now the object of so much grief to you, shall be to you a source of unspeakable joy. It will procure for you peace and pardon in this life, and eternal joy in the world to come. Thus their greatest apparent calamity would be to them finally the source of their highest comfort ; and though then they could not see how it could be, yet if they had known the whole case they would have seen that they might rejoice. As it was, they were to be consoled by the assurance of the Saviour that it would be for their good. And thus in our afflictions, if we could see the whole case, we should rejoice. As it is, when afflictions appear dark and mysterious, we may trust in the promise of God that they will be for our welfare. We may also remark here that the apparent triumphs of the wicked, though they may produce grief at present in the minds of Christians, will be yet overruled for their good. Their joy shall be turned into mourning, and the mourning of Christians into joy ; and the wicked man may be doing the very thing, as they were in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, that shall yet be made the means of promoting the glory of God and the good of his people. Psa. lxxvi. 10.

22. *I will see you again.* After my resurrection. ¶ *Your joy no man taketh from you.* You shall be so firmly persuaded that I have risen, and that I am the Messiah, that neither the threats nor persecutions of men shall ever be able to shake your faith, and produce doubt or unbelief, and thus take away your joy. This prediction was remarkably fulfilled.

sorrow : but I will see you again, and <sup>3</sup> your heart shall rejoice, and your joy <sup>4</sup> no man taketh from you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name : ask, <sup>5</sup> and ye

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xx. 20. Luke xxiv. 41, 52. <sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. i. 8. <sup>5</sup> Matt. vii. 7, 8. Jas. iv. 2, 3.

It is evident that after his ascension not one of the apostles ever doubted for a moment that he had risen from the dead. No persecution or trial was able to shake their faith ; and thus amidst all their afflictions, they had an unshaken source of joy.

23. *In that day.* After my resurrection and ascension. ¶ *Ye shall ask me nothing.* The word rendered *ask* here may have two significations, one to ask by way of inquiry, the other to ask for assistance. Perhaps there is reference here to both these senses. While he was with them, they had been accustomed to depend on him for the supply of their wants, and in a great degree to propose their trials to him, expecting his aid. See ch. xi. 3. Matt. viii. 25. They were also dependent on his personal instructions to explain to them the mysteries of his religion, and to remove their perplexities on the subject of his doctrines. They had not sought to God through him as the Mediator, but they had directly applied to the Saviour himself. He now tells them that henceforward their requests were to be made to God in his name, and that he, by the influences of his Spirit, would make known to them what Jesus would himself do, if bodily present. The emphasis in this verse is to be placed on the word *me*. Their requests were not to be made to him, but to the Father. ¶ *Whatsoever ye shall ask, &c.* See ch. xiv. 13.

24. *Hitherto.* During his ministry, and while he was with them. ¶ *Ye have asked, &c.* From the evangelists, as well as from this declaration, it seems that they had presented their requests for instruction and aid to Jesus himself. If they had prayed to God, it is probable that they

shall receive, that <sup>1</sup> your joy may be full.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in <sup>2</sup> proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in <sup>2</sup> proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

26 At <sup>3</sup> that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xv. 11. <sup>2</sup> Or, *parables*. Ver. 12, 16, 17. *Psa.* xlix. 4; lxxviii. 2. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 23.

had not done so in its name. This great truth that we must approach God in the name of the Mediator, was reserved for the last that the Saviour was to communicate to them. It was to be presented at the close of his ministry. Then they were prepared in some degree to understand it. And then, amidst trials, and wants, and a sense of their weakness and unworthiness, they would see the preciousness of this great truth, and rejoice in the privilege of being thus permitted to draw near to God. Though he would be bodily absent, yet their blessings would still be given through the same unchanging Friend. ¶ *Ask*, &c. Now they had the assurance that they might approach God in his name. And amid all their trials, they might draw near to God, as well as all Christians since, knowing that he would hear and answer their prayers. ¶ *That your joy*, &c. See ch. xv. 11.

25. *In proverbs*. In a manner that appears obscure, enigmatical, and difficult to be understood. It is worthy of remark, that though his declarations in these chapters about his death and resurrection, appear to us to be plain, yet to the apostles, filled with Jewish prejudices and unwilling to believe that he was about to die, they would appear exceedingly obscure and perplexed. The plainest declarations to them on the subject would appear to be involved in mystery. ¶ *The time cometh*. This refers doubtless to the time after his ascension to heaven, when he would send the Holy Spirit plainly to teach them the great truths of religion. It does not appear that he himself after his resurrection gave them any more clear or full instruction than he had done before.

27 For <sup>4</sup> the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that <sup>5</sup> I came out from God.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no <sup>6</sup> proverb.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xiv. 21, 23. <sup>5</sup> Ver. 30; ch. xvii. 8. <sup>6</sup> Or, *parable*.

¶ *I will show you plainly*. As Jesus said that he would send the Holy Spirit, ver. 7, and as he came to carry forward the work of Christ, so it may be said that the teachings of the Holy Spirit were the teachings of Christ himself. ¶ *Of the Father*. Concerning the will and plan of the Father. Particularly his plan in the establishment and spread of the Christian religion, and in organizing the church. See Acts x.

26. *I say not that I will pray*, &c. In ch. xiv. 16, Jesus said that he would pray the Father, and that he would send the Comforter. In ch. xvii. he offered a memorable prayer for them. In Heb. vii. 25, it is said that Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for us. And it is constantly represented in the New Testament that it is by his intercession in heaven now that we obtain the blessings of pardon, peace, strength, and salvation. Compare Heb. ix. 24. This declaration of Jesus then does not mean that he would not intercede for them, but that there was no need then of his mentioning it to them again. They knew that; and in addition to that, he told them that God was ready and willing to confer on them all needful blessings.

27. See ch. xiv. 21, 23.

28. *I came forth from the Father*. I came sent by the Father. ¶ *And am come into the world*. See ch. iii. 19; vi. 14, 62; ix. 39.

29. *Now speakest thou plainly*. What he had said that perplexed them, was that which is contained in ver. 16. Compare ver. 17—19: "A little while and ye shall not see me," &c. This he had now explained by saying, ver. 28: "Again I

30 Now are we sure <sup>1</sup> that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee : by this we believe that thou earnest forth from God.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 17—19; ch. v. 20; xxi. 17. Heb. iv. 12.

leave the world, and go to the Father." In this there was no ambiguity, and they expressed themselves satisfied with his explanation.

30. *Now are we sure that thou knowest, &c.* Their difficulty had been to understand what was the meaning of his declaration in ver. 16. About this they conversed among themselves, ver. 17—19. It is evident that they had not mentioned their difficulty to him, and that he had not even heard their conversation among themselves, ver. 19. When therefore by his answers to them, ver. 20—28, he showed that he clearly understood their doubts and inquiries, and when he gave them an answer so satisfactory without their having inquired of him, it satisfied them that he knew the heart, and that he assuredly came from God. They were convinced that there was no need that any man should ask him, or propose his difficulties to him, since he knew them all, and could answer them.

31. *Do ye now believe?* Do you truly and really believe? This question was evidently asked to put them on a full examination of their hearts. Though they supposed that they had unshaken faith, faith that would endure every trial, yet he told them that they were about to go through scenes that would test them, and where they would need all their confidence in God. When we feel strong in the faith, we should examine ourselves. It may be that we are deceived; and it may be that God may even then be preparing trials for us that will shake our faith to its foundation. The Syriac and Arabic read this in the indicative as an affirmation: "Ye do now believe." The sense is not affected by this reading.

32. *The hour cometh.* To wit, on the next day, when he was crucified. ¶ *Ye shall be scattered.* See Matt. xxvi. 31. ¶ *Every man to his own.* That is, to his own home. You shall see me die, and suppose that the work is defeated,

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, <sup>2</sup> the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his <sup>3</sup> own,

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 31. Mark xiv. 27. <sup>3</sup> Or, his own house.

and return to your own dwellings. It is probable that the two disciples going to Emmaus were on their way to their dwellings. Luke xxiv. After his death, all the disciples retired into Galilee, and were engaged in their common employment of fishing. Ch. xxi. 1—14. Matt. xxviii. 7. ¶ *Leave me alone.* Leave me to die without human sympathy or compassion. It is remarkable that his disciples did not come near the cross to witness his sufferings, except perhaps the apostle John, ch. xix. 25—27; and no small part of his sufferings might be produced by the fact that he was forsaken. Pain is alleviated, and suffering made more tolerable by the presence and sympathy of friends, and there is no doubt that Jesus felt as a man, and as a man would have been in some degree comforted by the presence and sympathy of friends. We die surrounded by beloved relatives. We suffer comforted by their sympathy. He died forsaken, surrounded by bitter foes, who reviled and mocked him on the cross; and it was by these sorrows that he purchased our pardon. ¶ *Because the Father is with me.* His Father was his friend. He had all along trusted in God. In the prospect of his sufferings he could still look to him for support. And though in his dying moments he suffered so much as to use the language, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" yet it was language addressed to him still as his God: "My God, my God." Even then he had confidence in God, confidence so strong and unwavering that he could say, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." Luke xxiii. 46. In all these sufferings he had the assurance that God was his friend, that he was doing his will, that he was promoting his glory, and that He looked on him with approbation. It matters little who else forsakes us, if God be with us in the hour of pain and of death. And though we be poor, forsaken, or despised, yet if we have the consciousness of his presence and favour, then

and shall leave me alone : and <sup>1</sup> yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in <sup>2</sup> me ye might have peace. In <sup>3</sup> the world ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 29. Isa. i. 7. 9. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 27. Rom. v. 1. Eph. ii. 14. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xv. 10—31. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

we may fear no evil. His rod and his staff, they will comfort us. Without his favour then, death will be full of horrors though we be surrounded by weeping relatives, by all the honours, and splendour, and wealth which the world can bestow. The Christian can die, saying, I am not alone, because the Father is with me. The sinner dies without a friend that can sustain, and without one source of real joy.

33. *In me.* In my presence, and in the aid I shall render you by the Holy Spirit. ¶ *In the world.* Among the men to whom you are going. You must expect to be persecuted, afflicted, tormented. ¶ *I have overcome the world.* He overcame the prince of this world by his death. Ch. xii. 31. He vanquished the great foe of man, and triumphed over all that would work our ruin. He brought down aid and strength by his death ; and by procuring for us the friendship of God, and the influence of the Spirit ; by his own instructions and example ; by revealing to us the glories of heaven, and opening our eyes to see the superior excellence of heavenly things, he has furnished us with the means of overcoming all our enemies, and of triumphing in all our temptations. See Note, ch. xiv. 19. Also Rom. viii. 34—37. 1 John iv. 4 ; v. 4. Rev. xii. 11. Luther said of this verse, “that it was worthy to be carried from Rome to Jerusalem upon one’s knees.” The world is a vanquished enemy. Satan is an humbled foe. And all that believers have to do is to put their trust in the Captain of their salvation, putting on the whole armour of God : assured that the victory is theirs, and that the church shall yet shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Cant. vi. 10.

## CHAPTER XVII.

*Christ’s prayer that he himself might be glorified, 1—5 ; that his disciples might be kept from evil, 6—16 ; and sanctified, 17—19 ; that all his followers might be united, 20—23 ; and glorified at last, 24—26.*

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the <sup>4</sup> hour is come ;

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xii. 23 ; xiii. 32.

## CHAPTER XVII.

1. *These words.* The words addressed to them in the preceding chapters. They were proceeding to the garden of Gethsemane. It adds much to the interest of this prayer that it was offered in the stillness of the night, in the open air, and in the peculiarly tender circumstances in which Jesus and his apostles were. It is the longest prayer recorded in the New Testament. It was offered on the most tender and solemn occasion that has ever occurred in our world ; and it is perhaps the most sublime composition to be found any where. Jesus was about to die. Having expressed his love to his disciples, and made known to them his last desires, he now commends them to the protection and blessing of the God of grace. This prayer is, moreover, a specimen of the manner of his intercession, and it evinces the interest which he felt in behalf of all who should become his followers in all ages of the world. ¶ *Lifted up his eyes.* This was the common attitude of prayer. Compare Luke xviii. 13. ¶ *The hour is come.* That is, the appointed time for his sufferings and death. Compare Note, ch. xii. 27. ¶ *Glorify thy Son.* Honour thy Son. See ch. xi. 4. Give to the world demonstration that I am thy Son. So sustain me, and so manifest thy power in my death, resurrection, and ascension, as to afford indubitable evidence that I am the Son of God. ¶ *That thy Son also may glorify thee.* This refers clearly to the manifestation of the honour of God which would be made by the spread of the gospel among men, ver. 2. Jesus prayed that God would so honour him in his death, that striking proof might be furnished that he was the Messiah, and men thus be brought to honour God. By his death the law, and truth, and mercy,

glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee :

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that <sup>1</sup> he should give

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 24 ; ch. vi. 27, 54—57 ; x. 28 ; xi. 25, 26.

of God were honoured. By the spread of his gospel, and the conversion of sinners ; by all that Christ will do now that he is glorified to spread his gospel, God will be honoured. The conversion of a single sinner honours God. A revival of religion is an eminent means of promoting his glory. And the spread of the gospel among all nations shall yet do more than all other things to promote the honour of God among men. Whatever honours the Saviour, honours God. Just as he is exalted in view of the mind, so will God be honoured and obeyed.

2. *As thou hast given him power.* It was on the ground of this power given to Christ that the apostles were commanded to go and teach all nations. See Note, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. ¶ *All flesh.* All men. Matt. xxiv. 22. Luke iii. 6. *That he should give eternal life.* Note, ch. v. 24. ¶ *To as many as thou hast given him.* Note, ch. vi. 37 ; x. 16. To all on whom the Father has purposed to bestow the blessings of redemption through his Son. God has a plan in all he does, extending to men as well as to other objects. One part of his plan was that the atonement of Christ should not be in vain. Hence he promised him that he should see of the travail of his soul, and should be satisfied, Isa. liiii. 11 ; and hence the Saviour had the assurance that the Father had given him a portion of the human family, and would assuredly apply this great work to them. It is to be observed here that the Saviour in this prayer, makes an important distinction between *all flesh*, and those who were *given him*. He has power over all. He can control, direct, restrain them. Wicked men are so far under his universal dominion, and so far restrained by his power, that they shall not be able to prevent his bestowing redemption on those who were given him, i. e. all who will believe on him. Long ago, if they had been able, they would have banished religion from the world. But they are under the power of Christ, and it is his purpose that there shall be a

eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this <sup>2</sup> is life eternal, that they might know <sup>3</sup> thee tho <sup>4</sup> only

<sup>2</sup> 1 John v. 11. <sup>3</sup> Jer. ix. 23, 24. <sup>4</sup> 1 Thes. i. 9.

seed to serve him, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his church. Men who oppose the gospel should, therefore, feel that they cannot prevent the salvation of Christians, and should be alarmed lest they be found fighting against God.

3. *This is life eternal.* This is the source of eternal life ; or it is in this manner that it is to be obtained. The knowledge of God and of his Son Jesus Christ is itself a source of unspeakable and eternal joy. Compare ch. vi. 63 ; xi. 25 ; xii. 50. ¶ *Might know thee.* The word *know* here, as in other places, expresses more than a mere speculative acquaintance with the character and perfections of God. It includes all the impressions on the mind and life which a just view of God and of the Saviour is fitted to produce. It includes of course, love, reverence, obedience, honour, gratitude, supreme affection. To know God as he is, is to know and regard him as a law-giver, a sovereign, a parent, a friend. It is to yield the whole soul to him, and strive to obey his law. ¶ *The only true God.* The only God in opposition to all false gods. What is said here is in opposition to idols, not to Jesus himself, who, in 1 John v. 20, is called "the true God and eternal life." ¶ *And Jesus Christ.* To know Jesus Christ, is to have a practical impression of him as he is, that is, to suffer his character and work to make their due impression on the heart and life. Simply to have heard that there is a Saviour is not to know it. To have been taught in childhood and trained up in the belief of it, is not to know it. To know him is to have a just, practical view of him in all his perfections, as God and man, as a mediator, as a prophet, a priest, and a king. It is to feel our need of such a Saviour, to see that we are sinners, and to yield the whole soul to him, knowing that he is a Saviour fitted to our wants, and that in his hands our souls are safe. Compare Eph. iii. 19. Phil. iii. 10. Tit. i. 16. 1 John v. 20. In this verse is



true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou<sup>1</sup> hast sent.

4 I<sup>2</sup> have glorified thee on the earth: I<sup>3</sup> have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with

<sup>1</sup> Ch. x. 36.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 13.    <sup>3</sup> Ch. xix. 30.  
<sup>4</sup> Tim. iv. 7.

contained the sum and essence of the Christian religion, as it is distinguished from all the schemes of idolatry and philosophy, and all the false plans on which men have sought to obtain eternal life. The Gentiles worshipped many gods; the Christian worships one, the living and the true God; the Jew, the Deist, the Mohammedan, the Socinian, profess to acknowledge one God, without any atoning sacrifice and Mediator; the true Christian approaches Him through the great Mediator, equal with the Father, who for us became incarnate, and died that he might reconcile us to God.

4. *Have glorified thee.* In my instructions and life. See his discourses every where; the whole tendency of which is to put honour on God. ¶ *I have finished the work.* Compare ch. xix. 30. When he says, *I have finished*, he probably means to include also his death. All the preparations for that death were made. He had preached to the Jews, he had given them full proof that he was the Messiah; he had collected his disciples, had taught them the nature of his religion, had given them his parting counsel, and there was nothing remaining to be done but to return to God. We see here that Jesus was careful that his great and important work should be done before his dying hour. He did not postpone it to be performed just as he was leaving the world. So completely had he done his work, that even before his death he could say, *I have finished the work.* How happy would it be if men would imitate his example, and not leave their great work to be done on a dying bed. Christians should have their great work accomplished, and when that hour approaches have nothing to do but to die, and return to their Father in heaven.

5. *With thine own self.* In heaven, granting a participation of the same

the glory which I<sup>4</sup> had with thee before the world was.

6 I<sup>5</sup> have manifested thy name unto the men which thou<sup>6</sup> gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept<sup>7</sup> thy word.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. i. 1, 2. Phil. ii. 6. Heb. i. 3. 10.    <sup>5</sup> Ver. 26. Psa. xxii. 22.    <sup>6</sup> Ver. 2, 9, 11. Rom. viii. 30.    <sup>7</sup> Heb. iii. 6.

honour which the Father has. He had just said that he had glorified God on the earth; he now prays that God would glorify him in heaven. ¶ *With the glory.* With the honour. This word also includes the notion of happiness, or every thing which could render the condition blessed. ¶ *Before the world was.* There could not be a more distinct and clear declaration of the pre-existence of Christ than this. It means before the creation of the world; before there was any world. Of course the speaker here must have existed then, and this is equivalent to saying that he existed from eternity. See. ch. i. 1, 2; iii. 13; vi. 62; xvi. 28. The glory which he had then was that which was proper to the Son of God, represented by the expression being in the bosom of the Father, ch. i. 18; denoting intimacy, friendship, united felicity. The Son of God by becoming incarnate is represented as humbling himself; Greek, "he emptied himself." Phil. ii. 8. He laid aside for a time the external aspect of honour, and consented to become despised, and to assume the form of a servant. He now prays that God would raise him up to the dignity and honour which he had before his incarnation. This is the state to which he is now exalted, with the additional honour, of having made atonement for sin, and having opened the way to save a race of rebels from eternal death. The lowest condition on earth is frequently connected with the highest honours of heaven. Man looks on the outward appearance. God looks to him that is humble and of a contrite spirit.

6. *Have manifested thy name.* The word *name* here includes the attributes, or character of God. Jesus had made known his character, his law, his will, his plan of mercy. Or in other words, he had revealed God to them. The word *name* is often used to designate the per-

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words<sup>1</sup> which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vi. 68; xiv. 10.

son. Ch. xv. 21. Matt. x. 22. Rom. ii. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 1. ¶ *Which thou gavest me.* God gave them to him in his purpose. He gave them by his Providence. He so ordered affairs that they heard him preach and saw his miracles. And he gave them by disposing them to follow him when he called them. ¶ *Thine they were.* All men are God's by creation and by preservation; and he has a right to do with them as seemeth good in his sight. These men he chose to designate to be the apostles of the Saviour; and he committed them to him to be taught, and then commissioned them to carry his gospel, though amidst persecutions, to the ends of the world. God has a right to the services of all; and he has a right to appoint us to any labour, however humble or hazardous, or wearisome, where we may promote his glory and honour his name.

7. *They have known.* They have been taught that, and have believed it. ¶ *Hast given me.* This refers doubtless to the doctrine of Christ. Ver. 8. They are assured that all my instructions are of God.

8. *The words.* The doctrines. Christ often represented himself as instructed and sent, to teach certain great truths to men. Those he taught, and no others. See Note, ch. v. 30.

9, 10. *I pray for them.* In view of their dangers and trials, he sought the protection and blessing of God on them. His prayer was always answered. ¶ *Not for the world.* The term *world* here, as elsewhere, refers to wicked, rebellious, vicious men. The meaning of this expression here seems to be this: Jesus is praying for his disciples. As a reason why God should bless them, he says that they were not of the world; they had been taken out of the world, they belonged

for the world,\* but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all<sup>2</sup> mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I<sup>3</sup> am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come unto thee. Holy Father, keep<sup>4</sup> through thine own

<sup>2</sup> 1 John v. 19. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 15. <sup>4</sup> Gal. i. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 9. <sup>5</sup> 1 Pet. i. 5. Jude 1, 24.

unto God. The petition was not offered for wicked, perverse, rebellious men, but for those who were the friends of God, and were disposed to receive his favours. This passage then settles nothing about the question whether Christ prayed for sinners. He now prayed for his disciples, who were not those who hated him, and disregarded his favours. He afterwards extended the prayer for all who should become Christians. Ver. 20. When on the cross he prayed for his crucifiers and murderers. Luke xxiii. 34. ¶ *For they are thine.* This is used as a reason why God should protect and guide them. His honour was concerned in keeping them, and we may always fill our mouths with such arguments when we come before God, and plead that his honour will be advanced by keeping us from evil, and granting to us all needful grace. ¶ *I am glorified in them.* I am honoured by their preaching and lives. The sense of this place is: Those who are my disciples are thine. That which promotes my honour, will also promote thine. I pray, therefore, that they may have needful grace to honour my gospel, and to proclaim it among men.

11. *I am no more.* I have finished my work among men, and am about to leave the world. See ver. 4. ¶ *These are in the world.* They will be among wicked men and malignant foes. They will be subject to trials and persecutions. They will need the same protection which I could give them if I were with them. ¶ *Keep.* Preserve, defend, sustain them in trials, and save them from apostasy. ¶ *Through thine own name.* Our translators seem to have understood this expression as meaning "keep by thy power." But this probably is not its meaning. It

name<sup>1</sup> those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture<sup>2</sup> might be fulfilled.

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xviii. 10.    <sup>2</sup> Psa. cix. 6-19. Acts i. 16-20, 23.

is literally, "keep in thy name." And if the term *name* be taken to denote God himself, and his perfections, see Note, ver. 6, it means, keep in the knowledge of thyself. Preserve them in obedience to thee, and to thy cause. Suffer them not to fall away from thee, and to become apostates. ¶ *That they may be one.* That they may be united. ¶ *As we are.* This refers not to a union of nature, but of feeling, plan, purpose. Any other union between Christians is impossible. But a union of affection is what the Saviour sought, and this he desired might be so strong as to be an illustration of the unchanging love between the Father and the Son. See ver. 21-23.

12. *While I was with them in the world.* While I was engaged with them among other men, surrounded by the people and the temptations of the world. Jesus had now finished his work among the men of the world, and was performing his last offices with his disciples. ¶ *I kept them.* By my example, instructions, and miracles. I preserved them from apostasy. ¶ *In thy name.* In the knowledge and worship of thee. See ver. 6-11. ¶ *Those that thou gavest me, &c.* The word *gavest* is evidently used by the Saviour to denote not only to give to him to be his real followers, but also as apostles. It is here used probably in the sense of giving as apostles. God had so ordered it by his providence, that they had been given to him to be his apostles and followers. But the terms, *thou gavest me*, do not of necessity prove that they were true believers. Of Judas, Jesus knew that he was a deceiver, and a devil. Ch. vi. 70. Judas is there represented as having been chosen by the Saviour to the apostleship, and this is equivalent to saying that he was given

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and<sup>3</sup> the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou should-

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xv. 18, 19.

to him for this work; yet at the same time he knew his character, and understood that he had never been renewed. ¶ *None of them.* None of those chosen to the apostolic office. ¶ *But the son of perdition.* See Note, Matt. i. 1. The term *son* was given by the Hebrews to those who possessed the character described by the word or name following. Thus, sons of Belial, those who possessed his character. Children of wisdom, those who were wise. Matt. xi. 19. Thus Judas is called a son of perdition, because he had the character of a destroyer. He was a traitor and a murderer. And this shows that he who knew the heart, regarded his character as that of a wicked man, one whose appropriate name was that of a son of perdition. ¶ *That the scriptures, &c.* See Note, ch. xiii. 18. Compare Psa. xli. 9.

13. *My joy fulfilled, &c.* See Note, ch. xv. 11. The expression, *my joy*, here probably refers to the joy of the apostles respecting the Saviour; the joy which would result from his resurrection, ascension, and intercession in heaven.

14. *I have given them, &c.* See ver. 8. ¶ *The world hath hated them, &c.* Ch. xv. 18-21.

15. *That thou shouldest take them out of the world.* Though they were going into trials and persecutions, yet Jesus did not pray that they might be removed soon from them. It was better that they should endure them, and thus spread abroad the knowledge of his name. It would be easy for God to remove his people at once to heaven, but it is better for them to remain and show the power of religion in supporting the soul in the midst of trial, and to spread his gospel among men. ¶ *Shouldest keep them from evil.* This may mean either from

est take them out of the world, but <sup>1</sup> that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify <sup>2</sup> them through thy truth: thy <sup>3</sup> word is truth.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xlviii. 16. 1 Chron. iv. 10. Gal. i. 4. <sup>2</sup> Acts xv. 9. Eph. v. 26. 2 Thess. ii. 13. <sup>3</sup> Psa. cxix. 151.

the evil one, that is the devil; or from evil in general, that is, from apostasy, from sinking in temptation. Preserve them from that evil, or give them such grace that they may endure all trials, and be sustained amidst them. See Note, Matt. vi. 13. It matters little how long we are in this world, if we are kept in this manner.

16. See ch. xv. 19.

17. *Sanctify them.* This word means, to render pure, or cleanse from sins. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 1 Thess. v. 23. Sanctification in the heart of a Christian is progressive. It consists in his becoming more like God and less attached to the world, in his getting the ascendancy over evil thoughts, and passions, and impure desires; and in his becoming more and more weaned from earthly objects, and attached to those things which are unseen and eternal. The word also means to consecrate, to set apart to a holy office or purpose. See ver. 19; also Note, ch. x. 36. When Jesus prayed here that God would sanctify them, he probably included both these ideas, that they might be made personally more holy, and might be truly consecrated to God. Ministers of the gospel will be really devoted to the service of God, just in proportion as they are personally pure. ¶ *Through thy truth.* Truth is a representation of things as they are. The Saviour prayed that through those just views of God and of themselves, they might be made holy. To see things as they are is to see God to be infinitely lovely and pure, his commands to be reasonable and just, heaven to be holy and desirable, his service to be easy, and religion pleasant and sin odious; to see that life is short, that death is near, that the pride, pomp, pleasures, wealth, and honours of this world are of little value, and that it is of infinite importance to be prepared to enter on the eternal state of being. He that sees all this, or

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And <sup>4</sup> for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified <sup>5</sup> through the truth.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. lxiii. 1. 1 Cor. i. 2, 30. 2 Cor. iv. 13. 1 Thess. iv. 7. 2 Tim. ii. 10. <sup>5</sup> Or, truly sanctified.

looks on things as they are, will desire to be holy. He will make it his great object to live near to God, and to glorify his name. In the sanctification of the soul, God makes use of all truth, or of everything fitted to make a representation of things as they are to the mind. His word states that, and no more; his Spirit and his providence state it. The earth and the heavens, the seasons, the sunshine, and the rain, all are fitted to teach us his goodness and power, and lead us to him. His daily mercies tend to the same end, and afflictions have the same design. Our own sickness teaches us that we are soon to die. The death of a friend teaches us the instability of all earthly comforts, and the necessity of seeking better joys. All these things are fitted to make just representations to the mind, and thus to sanctify the soul. As the Christian is constantly amid these objects, so he should be constantly growing in grace, and daily and hourly gaining new and deeper impressions of the great truths of religion. ¶ *Thy word is truth.* All that thou hast spoken; that is, all that is contained in the Bible. All the commands and promises of God, his representations of his own character, and of that of man; his account of the mission and death of his Son; of the grave, the resurrection, judgment, and eternity, all tend to represent things as they are, and are thus fitted to sanctify the soul. We have here also the testimony of the Saviour, that the revelation which God has given is true. All that God has spoken is true, and the Christian should rejoice and the sinner should tremble. See Psa. xix. 7—14.

19. *I sanctify myself.* I consecrate myself exclusively to the service of God. The word *sanctify* does not refer here to personal sanctification, for he had no sin, but to setting himself apart entirely to the work of redemption. ¶ *That they*

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be <sup>1</sup> one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xii. 5.

*also, &c.* 1. That they might have an example of the proper manner of labouring in the ministry, and might learn of me how to discharge its duties. Ministers will understand their work best when they most faithfully study the example of their great model, the Son of God. 2. That they might be made pure by the effect of my sanctifying myself; that is, that they might be made pure by the shedding of that blood which cleanses from all sin. By this only can men be made holy. And it was because the Saviour so sanctified himself, or set himself to this work so unreservedly as to shed his own blood, that any soul can be made pure, and fit for the kingdom of God.

20, 21. *For these alone, &c.* Not for the apostles only, but for all who shall be converted under the preaching of the gospel. They will all need like grace, and be exposed to similar trials. It is a matter of unspeakable joy that each Christian, however humble, or unknown to men, however poor, unlearned, or despised, can reflect that he was remembered in prayer by him whom God heareth always. We value the prayers of pious friends. How much more should we value this petition of the Son of God! To that single prayer, we who are Christians, owe infinitely more real benefits than the world can ever bestow. And in the midst of any trials we may remember that the Son of God prayed for us, and that the prayer was assuredly heard, and will be answered in reference to all who truly believe. ¶ *All may be one.* May be united as brethren. Christians are all redeemed by the same blood, and are going to the same heaven. They have the same wants, the same enemies, the same joys. Though they are divided into different denominations, yet they will meet at last in the same abodes of glory. Hence they should feel that they belong to the same family, and are children of the same God and Father. There are no ties so tender as

in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

22 And <sup>2</sup> the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

<sup>2</sup> Ch. i. 16; xv. 18, 19. 2 Cor. iiii. 18; v. 20. Eph. ii. 20—22. 2 Thess. i. 5—10. Rev. xxi. 14.

those which bind us in the gospel. There is no friendship so pure and enduring, as that which results from having the same attachment to the Lord Jesus. Hence Christians, in the New Testament, are represented as being indissolubly united, parts of the same body, and members of the same family. Acts iv. 32—35 Rom. xii. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 4—31. Eph. ii. 20—22. On the ground of this union they are exhorted to love one another, to bear one another's burdens, and to study the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Rom. xii. 5—16. Eph. iv. 3. ¶ *As thou, Father, art in me.* See ch. xiv. 10. This does not affirm that the union between Christians should be in all respects like that between the Father and the Son, but only in the points in which they are capable of being compared. It is not the union of nature which is referred to, but the union of plan, of counsel, of purpose; seeking the same ends, and manifesting attachment to the same objects, and a desire to achieve the same results. ¶ *That they also may be one in us.* To be in God and in Christ, is to be united to God and Christ. The expression is common in the New Testament. The phrase here used denotes a union among all Christians founded on, and resulting from, a union to the same God and Saviour. ¶ *That the world may believe, &c.* That the world, so full of animosities, and fightings, may see the power of Christian principle in overcoming all the sources of contention, and producing love, and may thus see that a religion that could produce this must be from heaven. See Note, ch. xiii. 34. This was done. Such was the attachment of the early Christians to each other, that a heathen was constrained to say, "See how these Christians love one another."

22. *And the glory, &c.* The honour which thou hast conferred on me by admitting me to union with thee, the same

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect <sup>1</sup> in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 12-16. Phil. iii. 15. 1 Pet. v. 10.

honour I have conferred on them by admitting them to like union with me. ¶ *May be one, even as we are one.* Not in nature, or in the mode of existence, for this was not the subject of discourse, and would be impossible; but in feeling, in principle, in purpose. Evincing, as the Father and the Son had always done, the same great aim and plan; not pursuing different interests, or counteracting each other's purposes, or forming parties, but seeking the same ends, by the same means. This is the union between the Father and the Son. Always, in the creation, preservation, and redemption of the world, they have sought the same object. And this is to be the model on which Christians should act.

23. *May be made perfect in one.* That their union may be complete. That there may be no want of union, no jars, discords, or contentions. A machine is perfect or complete when it has all its parts, and is in good order; when there is no portion of it wanting. So the union of Christians, for which the Saviour prayed, would be complete, or perfect, if there were no controversies, no envyings, no contentions, and no heart-burnings, and jealousies. It is worthy of remark here, how entirely the union of his people occupied the mind of Jesus as he drew near to death. He saw the danger of *strife* and contentions in the church. He knew the imperfections of even the best of men. He saw how prone they would be to passion, and even ambition; how ready to mistake love of sect or party, for zeal for pure religion; how ambitious and worldly men in the church might divide his followers, and produce unholy feeling and contention. And he saw, also, how much this would do to dishonour religion. Hence he took occasion, when he was about to die, to impress the importance of union on his disciples. By solemn admonition, and in most tender and affecting appeals to God in supplication, he showed his sense of the value of this union. He used the most sublime

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be <sup>2</sup> with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, <sup>3</sup> which thou

<sup>2</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 17. <sup>3</sup> Gen. xlv. 13. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iiii. 18. 1 John iii. 2.

and impressive illustration, adverted to the eternal union between the Father and himself, reminded them of his love, and of the effect that their union would have on the world, to fix it more deeply in their hearts. The effect has shown the infinite wisdom of the Saviour. The contentions and strifes of Christians have shown his knowledge in foreseeing them. The effect of this on religion has shown that he understood the value of union. Christians have contended long enough. It is time that they should hear the parting admonitions of their Redeemer, and go unitedly against their common foe. The world still lies in wickedness, and the friends of Jesus, bound by the cords of eternal love, should advance together against the common enemy, and spread the triumphs of the gospel around the globe. All that is needful now, under the blessing of God, to convince the world that God sent the Lord Jesus, is that very union among all Christians for which he prayed; and when that union of feeling, and purpose, and action shall take place, the task of sending the gospel to all nations will be soon accomplished, and the morning of the millennial glory will dawn upon the world.

24. *I will.* This expression, though it commonly denotes command, is here only expressive of desire. It is used in prayer, and it was not the custom of the Saviour to use language of command when addressing God. It is often used to express strong and earnest desire, or a pressing and importunate wish, such as we are exceedingly anxious should not be denied. Matt. xii. 38; xv. 28. Mark vi. 25; x. 35. ¶ *Where I am.* In heaven. The Son of God was still in the bosom of the Father. Ch. i. 18. See Note, ch. vii. 34. Probably the expression here means, where I shall be. ¶ *My glory.* My honour and dignity, when exalted to the right hand of God. The word *behold* implies more than simply seeing. It means also to participate, to enjoy. Note, ch. iii. 3. Matt. v. 8. ¶ *Thou lovest me, &c.* This is

hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, <sup>1</sup> the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that <sup>2</sup> the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 11. Isa. xiv. 21. Rom. iii. 26. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xiv. 23; xv. 9. Eph. i. 6, 22, 23; ii. 4, 5. 2 Thess. ii. 16.

another of the numerous passages which prove that the Lord Jesus existed before the creation of the world. Nor is it possible to explain it on any other supposition.

25. *Hath not known thee.* Note, ver. 3.

26. *Thy name.* Note, ver. 6. ¶ *And will declare it.* After my resurrection, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit. Luke xxiv. 46. Acts i. 3. ¶ *I is them.* By my doctrines, and the influences of my Spirit. That my religion may show its power, and produce its proper fruits in their minds. Gal. iv. 19.

The discourse in ch. xiii.—xvi. is the most tender and sublime that was ever pronounced in our world. No composition can be found any where so fitted to sustain the soul in trial, or to support it in death. This sublime and beautiful discourse is appropriately closed by a solemn and most affecting prayer; a prayer at once expressive of the profoundest reverence for God, and the tenderest love for men; simple, grave, tender, sublime, and full of consolation. It is the model for our prayers, and with like reverence, faith, and love, we should come before God. This prayer for the church will yet be fully answered; and he who loves the church and the world cannot but cast his eyes onward to that time when all believers shall be one, and when contentions, bigotry, strife, and anger shall cease; and when, in perpetual union and love, Christians shall show forth the power and purity of that holy gospel with which the Saviour came to bless mankind. Soon may that happy day arise!

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Christ betrayed by Judas, 1—5. The officers fall to the ground, 6—9. Peter's seal for his Master, 10, 11. Jesus led to the high priest, 12—14. Peter denies his Master during his examination before the high priest, 15—27. Jesus examined before Pilate, 28—40.*

**W**HEN Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron,<sup>1</sup> where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betray-

<sup>2</sup> 2 Sam. xv. 23.

## CHAPTER XVIII

1. *The brook Cedron.* This was a small stream that flowed to the east of Jerusalem, through the valley of Jehoshaphat, and divided the city from the mount of Olives. It was also called Kidron and Cedron. In summer it is almost dry. The word used here by the evangelist, *χισιάρριον*, denotes properly a water stream (from *χίμα*, shower of water; and *ρίω*, *ρίος*, to flow, flowing), and the idea is that of a stream that was swollen by rain, or by the melting of the snow. (Passow, Lex.) This small rivulet runs along on the east of Jerusalem till it is joined by the water of the pool of Siloam, and the water that flows down on the west side of the city through the valley of Jehoshaphat, and then goes off in a south-east direction to the Dead Sea. See any map of Jerusalem. Over this brook David passed when he fled from Absalom. 2 Sam. xv. 23. It is often mentioned in the Old Testament. 1 Kin. xv. 13. 2 Kin. xxiii. 6, 12. 2 Chron. xv. 16; xxx. 14. ¶ *Where was a garden.* On the west side of the mount of Olives. This was called Gethsemane. See Matt. xxvi. 36. It is probable that this was the property of some wealthy man in Jerusalem, perhaps some friend of the Saviour. It was customary for the rich in great cities to have country-seats in the vicinity. This it seems was so accessible that Jesus was accustomed to enter it, and yet so retired as to be a suitable place for devotion.

2. *Jesus oft-times resorted thither.*

ed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas<sup>1</sup> then, having received a band of *men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing<sup>2</sup> all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 Jesus answered him, Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>3</sup> Jesus saith unto them,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 47—56. Mark xiv. 43—49. Luke xxii. 47—53. <sup>2</sup> Ch. x. 17, 18. Acts ii. 28. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xix. 19. Matt. ii. 23.

For what purpose he went there is not declared, but it is probable for the purpose of retirement and prayer. He had no home in the city, and he sought this place away from the bustle and confusion of the capital, for private communion with God. Every Christian should have some place, be it a grove, a room, or a garden, where he may be alone and offer his devotions to God. We are not told much of the private habits of Jesus, but we are permitted to know so much of him as to be assured that he was accustomed to seek for a place of retirement; and during the great feasts of the Jews, the mount of Olives was the place which he chose. Ch. viii. 1. Matt. xxi. 17. Luke xxi. 37.

3. *A band.* See Note, Matt. xxvi. 47; xvii. 27. John passes over the agony of Jesus in the garden, probably because it was so fully described by the other evangelists. ¶ *Lanterns, &c.* This was the time of the full moon, but it might have been cloudy, and their taking lights with them shows their determination to find him.

6. *They went backward, &c.* The cause of their retiring in this manner is not mentioned. Various things might have produced it. The frank, open, and fearless manner in which Jesus had addressed them, might have convinced them of his innocence, and deterred them from prosecuting their wicked attempt. His disclosure of himself was sudden and unexpected; and while they perhaps

I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they<sup>4</sup> went backward, and fell to the ground.

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *he*: if therefore ye seek me,<sup>5</sup> let these go their way:

9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake,<sup>6</sup> Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

<sup>4</sup> Psa. xxvii. 2; xl. 14. <sup>5</sup> Isa. liii. 6. Eph. v. 25. <sup>6</sup> Ch. xvii. 12.

anticipated that he would make an effort to escape, they were amazed at his open and bold profession. Their consciences reproved them for their crimes; and probably the firm, decided, and yet mild manner in which Jesus addressed them, the expression of his unequalled power in knowing how to find the way to the consciences of men, made them feel that they were in the presence of more than mortal man. There is no proof that there was here any miraculous power, any mere physical force; and to suppose that there was, greatly detracts from the moral sublimity of the scene.

8. *Let them go, &c.* These apostles. This shows his care and love even in the hour of danger. He expected to die. They were to carry the news of his death to the ends of the earth. Hence he, the faithful Captain of salvation, went foremost into trials; he was the good Shepherd who secured the safety of the flock, and went before them into danger. By the question which he asked them, he had secured their safety. He was answered that they sought for him. He demanded that, agreeably to their declaration, they should take him only and leave his followers at liberty. The wisdom, caution, and prudence of Jesus forsook him in no peril, however sudden, and in no circumstances, however difficult or trying.

9. *The saying.* Ch. xvii. As he had kept them for more than three years, so he still sought their welfare even when his death was near.



10 Then <sup>1</sup> Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup <sup>2</sup> which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound him,

13 And led him away to Annas first; <sup>3</sup> for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.<sup>4</sup>

14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel <sup>5</sup> to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

15 ¶ And <sup>6</sup> Simon Peter fol-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 51. Mark xiv. 47. Luke xxii. 49, 50. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xx. 23; xxvi. 39, 42. <sup>3</sup> Luke iii. 2. Acts iv. 6. <sup>4</sup> And Annas sent Christ bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. Ver. 24. <sup>5</sup> Ch. xi. 49, 50. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvi. 58—68. Mark xiv. 54. Luke xxii. 54.

10, 11. See Note, Matt. xxvi. 51, 52. ¶ *The servant's name was Malchus.* His name is mentioned by neither of the other evangelists, nor is it said by the other evangelists who was the disciple that gave the blow. It is probable that both Peter and the servant were alive when the other gospels were written.

12. See Matt. xxvi. 50.

13. *To Annas first.* Probably his house was nearest to them, and he had great authority and influence in the Jewish nation. He had been himself a long time high priest; he had had five sons who had successively enjoyed the office of high priest, and that office was now filled by his son-in-law. It was of importance, therefore, to obtain his sanction and counsel in their work of evil. ¶ *That same year.* Ch. xi. 49.

14. *Had given counsel, &c.* Ch. xi. 49, 50. This is referred to here probably to show how little prospect there was that Jesus would have justice done him in the hands of a man who had already pronounced on the case.

lowed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 ¶ The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

15—18. See Notes, Matt. xxvi. 57, 58. ¶ *Another disciple.* Not improbably John. Some critics, however, have supposed that this disciple was one who dwelt at Jerusalem, and who, not being a Galilean, could enter the place without suspicion. John, however, mentions the circumstance of his being known to them, to show why it was that he was not questioned as Peter was. It is not probable that any danger resulted from its being known that he was a follower of Jesus, or that any harm was meditated on them for this. The questions addressed to Peter were not asked by those in authority, and his apprehensions which led to his denial were groundless.

19. *Of his disciples.* To ascertain their number and power. The charge on which they wished to arraign him was that of sedition, or of rebellion against Cæsar. To make that plausible, it was necessary to show that he had made so many disciples as to form a strong and dangerous faction. But as they had no direct proof of that, the high priest in-

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly,<sup>1</sup> to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and<sup>2</sup> in secret have I said nothing.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. vii. 14, 26, 28; viii. 2. Luke iv. 15.  
<sup>2</sup> Acts xxvi. 26.

discreetly and improperly attempted to draw the Saviour into a confession. Of this he was aware, and referred him to the proper source of evidence, his open, undisguised conduct before the world. ¶ *His doctrine.* His teaching. The sentiments that he inculcated. The object was, doubtless, to convict him of teaching sentiments that tended to subvert the Mosaic institutions, or that were treasonable against the Roman government. Either would have answered the design of the Jews, and they, doubtless, expected that he, an unarmed and despised Galilean, now completely in their power, would easily be drawn into confessions that art and malice could use to procure his condemnation.

20. *Openly to the world.* If his doctrine had tended to excite sedition and tumult, if he had aimed to overthrow the government, he would have trained his friends in secret; he would have retired from public view, and have laid his plans in private. This is the case with all who attempt to subvert existing establishments. Instead of that he had proclaimed his views to all. He had done it in every place of public concourse, in the synagogue, and in the temple. He here speaks the language of one conscious of his innocence, and determined to insist on his rights. ¶ *Always resort.* Constantly assemble. They were required to assemble there three times in a year, and great multitudes were there constantly. ¶ *In secret, &c.* He had taught no private or concealed doctrine. He had taught nothing to his disciples which he had not himself taught in public, and commanded them to teach. Matt. x. 27. Luke xii. 8.

21. *Why askest thou me? Ask them, &c.* Jesus here insisted on his rights,

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck<sup>3</sup> Jesus with<sup>4</sup> the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

23 Jesus answered him,<sup>5</sup> If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but<sup>6</sup> if well, why askest thou me?

<sup>3</sup> Job xvi. 10. Jer. xx. 2. Acts xxiii. 2, 3.  
<sup>4</sup> Or, with a rod. <sup>5</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 1. <sup>6</sup> 1 Pet. i. 10—23.

and reproves the high priest for his unjust and illegal manner of extorting a confession from him. If he had done wrong, or taught erroneous and seditious doctrine, it was easy to prove it, and the course which he had a right to demand was, that they should establish the charge by fair and incontrovertible evidence. We may here learn, 1. That though Jesus was willing to be reviled and persecuted, yet he also insisted that justice should be done him. 2. He was conscious of innocence, and had been so open in his conduct, that he could appeal to the vast multitudes which had heard him, as witnesses in his favour. 3. It is proper for us, when persecuted and reviled, meekly, but firmly, to insist on our rights, and to demand that justice should be done us. Laws are made to protect the innocent as well as to condemn the guilty. 4. Christians, like their Saviour, should so live that they may confidently appeal to all who have known them as witnesses of their sincerity, purity, and rectitude of their lives. 1 Pet. iv. 13—16.

22. *One of the officers.* One of the inferior officers, or those who attended to the court. ¶ *With the palm of his hand.* This may mean, gave him a blow with the open hand, or with a rod. The Greek does not determine which. Whatever way it was done, it was a violation of all law and justice. Jesus had shown no disrespect for the officer, the high priest, and if he had, this was the proper way to punish it. The Vulgate reads this: "Smote the cheek of Jesus." The Vulgate and Arabic: "Gave him a blow."

23. *Spoken evil.* In my answer to the high priest. If there was any ground to the office, and want of regard to the

24 Now <sup>1</sup> Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

25 And Simon Peter stood and warned himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high priest, being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did

<sup>1</sup> See ver. 13. Matt. xxvi. 57.

law which appointed him, then testify to the fact, and let punishment be inflicted according to the law. Compare Exod. xxii. 23. ¶ *But if well, &c.* While an accused person is on trial, he is under the protection of the court, and has a right to demand that all legal measures should be taken to secure his rights. On this right Jesus insisted, and thus showed that though he had no disposition to take revenge, yet he insisted that when arraigned, strict justice should be done. This shows that his precept that when we are smitten on one cheek, we should turn the other, Matt. v. 39, is consistent with a firm demand that justice should be done us. That precept refers besides rather to private matters than to judicial proceedings. It does not demand that when we are unjustly arraigned, or assaulted, and when the law is in our favour, we should sacrifice our rights to the malignant accuser. Such a surrender would be injustice to the law and to the community, and be giving legal triumph to the wicked, and destroying the very end of all law. In private matters this effect would not follow, and we should there bear injuries without reviling, or seeking for vengeance.

24. Compare ver. 13, with Matt. xxvi. 57.

25, 26. See Note, Matt. xxvi. 69—74.

28. See Matt. xxvii. 1, 2. ¶ *Hall of judgment.* The *prætorium*, the same word that, in Matt. xxvii. 27, is translated common hall. See Note on that place. It was the place where the Roman prætor, or governor, heard and decided cases brought before him. Jesus had been condemned by the *sanhedrim*, and pronounced guilty of death. Matt. xxvi. 66. But they had not power to carry their

not I see thee in the garden with him?

27 Peter then denied again: and immediately <sup>2</sup> the cock crew.

28 ¶ Then led <sup>3</sup> they Jesus from Caiaphas unto <sup>4</sup> the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest <sup>5</sup> they should be de-

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xlii. 38. Matt. xxvi. 74. Mark xiv. 72. Luke xxii. 60. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvii. 2. Mark xv.

1—14. Luke xxiii. 1—7. <sup>4</sup> Or, *Pilate's house.*

<sup>5</sup> Acts x. 28.

sentence into execution, ver. 31; and they, therefore, sought that he might be condemned and executed by Pilate. ¶ *Lest they should be defiled.* They considered the touch of a Gentile to be a defilement, and on this occasion, at least, seemed to consider it a pollution to enter the house of a Gentile. They took care, therefore, to guard themselves against what they considered ceremonial pollution, while they were wholly unconcerned at the enormous crime of putting the innocent Saviour to death, and imbruing their hands in their Messiah's blood. Probably there is not anywhere to be found another such instance of petty regard to the mere ceremonies of the law, and attempting to keep from pollution, at the same time that their hearts were filled with malice, and they were meditating the most enormous of all crimes. But it shows us how much more concerned men will be at the violation of the mere forms and ceremonies of religion than they will be at real crime; and how they endeavour to keep their consciences at ease amidst their deeds of wickedness by the observance of some of the outward ceremonies of religion, by mere sanctimoniousness. ¶ *That they might eat the passover.* Note, Matt. xxvi. 2, 17. This defilement, produced by contact with a Gentile, they considered as equivalent to that of the contact of a dead body, Lev. xxii. 4—6. Num. v. 2, and as disqualifying them to partake of the passover in a proper manner. The word translated *passover* means properly a paschal lamb which was slain and eaten on the observance of this feast. This rite Jesus had observed with his disciples the day before this. It has been supposed by many that he anticipated the

filed; but that they might eat the passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor,

usual time of observing it one day, and was crucified on the day on which the Jews observed it. But this opinion is improbable. The very day of keeping the ordinance was specified in the law of Moses, and it is not probable that the Saviour departed from the commandment. All the circumstances, also, lead us to suppose that he observed it at the usual time and manner. Matt. xxvi. 17, 19. The only passage which has lead to a contrary opinion, is this in John. But here the word *passover* does not, of necessity, mean the paschal lamb. It probably refers to the feast which followed the sacrifice of the lamb, and which continued some days. Compare Num. xxviii. 16, 17. The whole feast was called the passover, and they were unwilling to defile themselves, even though the paschal lamb had been killed, because it would disqualify them from participating in the remainder of the ceremonies.—*Light-foot*.

30. If he were not a malefactor. A violator of the law. If we had not determined that he was such, and was worthy of death. Matt. xxvi. 66. From this it appears, that they did not deliver him up to be tried, but hoped that Pilate would at once give sentence that he should be executed according to their request. It is probable that in ordinary cases the Roman governor was not accustomed to make very strict inquiry into the justice of the sentence. The Jewish sanhedrim tried causes, and pronounced sentence, and the sentence was usually approved by the governor. But in this case, Pilate, evidently contrary to their expectations, proceeded himself to re-hear and re-try the cause. He had doubtless heard of the miracles of Jesus. He seems to have been strongly prepossessed with the belief of his innocence. He knew that they had delivered him from mere envy. Matt. xxvii. 18. And hence he inquired of them the nature of the case, and the kind

of charge which they expected to substantiate against him.

31 Then said Pilate unto them. Take <sup>1</sup> ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 6, 7 Acts xxv. 18—22.

of charge which they expected to substantiate against him.

31. Judge him, &c. The Jews had not directly informed him that they had judged him, and pronounced him worthy of death. Pilate, therefore, tells them to inquire into the case, to ascertain the truth of his guilt, and to decide on what the law of Moses pronounced. It has been doubted whether this gave them the power of putting him to death, or was either a direction to them to inquire into the case, or a command to take it into their own hands, and inflict on him, if they judged him guilty, the mild punishment which they were yet at liberty to inflict on criminals. Probably the former is intended. As they had already determined that in their view this case demanded the punishment of death, so in their answer to Pilate they implied that they had pronounced on it, and that he ought to die. They still, therefore, pressed it on his attention, and refused to obey his injunction to judge him. ¶ *It is not lawful*, &c. The Jews were accustomed to put persons to death still in a popular tumult. Acts vii. 59, 60. But they had not the power to do it in any case in a regular way of justice. When they first laid the plan of arresting the Saviour, they did it to kill him, Matt. xxvi. 4; but whether they intended to do this secretly, or in a tumult, or by the concurrence of the Roman governor, is uncertain. The Jews themselves say, that the power of inflicting capital punishments was taken away about forty years before the destruction of the temple. But still, it is probable that in the time of Christ they had the power of determining on capital cases in instances that pertained to religion. Josephus, Ant. lib. xiv. cap. 10, § 2. Compare Jewish Wars, lib. vi. cap. 2, § 4. In this case, however, it is supposed that their sentence was to be confirmed by the Roman governor. But it is admitted on all hands, that they had

lawful for us <sup>1</sup> to put any man to death :

32 That they saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying <sup>2</sup> what death he should die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews ? <sup>3</sup>

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 15. Gen. xlix. 10. Ezek. xxi. 27. Hos. iii. 4, 5. <sup>2</sup> Matt. xx. 19. Luke xviii. 32, 33. <sup>3</sup> Ch. i. 49; xii. 13, 15. Psa. ii. 6—12.

not this power in the case of seditions, tumults, or treasons against the Roman government. If they had this power in the case of blasphemy and irreligion, they did not dare to exert it here, because they were afraid of tumult among the people. Matt. xxvi. 5. Hence they sought to bring in the authority of Pilate. To do this they endeavoured to make it appear that it was a case of sedition and treason, and one which therefore demanded the interference of the Roman governor. Hence it was on this charge that they arraigned him. Luke xxiii. 2. Thus a tumult might be avoided, and the odium of putting him to death they expected would fall, not on themselves, but on Pilate.

32. *That the saying of Jesus, &c.* To wit, that he should be delivered into the hands of Gentiles, and should be crucified. Matt. xx. 19. Neither of these things would have happened if he had been put to death in the way that the Jews first contemplated. Matt. xxvi. 4. Though it be admitted that they had the power in religious cases to do it, yet it would not have been done, as Jesus predicted, by the Gentiles; and though they had that power, yet they had no power to crucify. This was particularly a Roman punishment. And thus it was ordered, in the providence of God, that the prediction of Jesus in both these respects should be fulfilled.

33. *Art thou the king of the Jews?* This was after they had accused him of perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar. Luke xxiii. 2, 3.

34. *Of thyself?* From any conviction

thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own <sup>4</sup> nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me : what hast thou done?

36 Jesus <sup>5</sup> answered, My <sup>6</sup> kingdom is not of this world : if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the

<sup>4</sup> Ch. xix. 11. Acts iii. 13. <sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 13. <sup>6</sup> Ch. vi. 15. Psa. xlv. 3, 6. Isa. ix. 6, 7. Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14. Zech. ix. 9. Luke xii. 14. Rom. xiv. 17. Col. i. 13.

of your own mind, or any apprehension of danger. During all the time in which you have been prætor, have you seen anything in me that has led you to apprehend sedition, or danger to the Roman power? This evidently was intended to remind Pilate that nothing was proved against him, and to caution him against being influenced by the malicious accusations of others. Jesus demanded a just trial, and claimed that Pilate should not be influenced by any reports that he might have heard of him.

35. *Am I a Jew?* Am I likely to be influenced by Jewish prejudices and partialities? Am not I, being a Roman, likely to judge impartially, and to decide on the accusations without being biased by the malignant charges of the accusers? ¶ *Thine own nation, &c.* In this Pilate denies that it was from any thing that he had observed that Jesus was arraigned. He admits that it was from the accusations of others. But then he tells the Saviour that the charge was one of moment, and worthy of the deepest attention. It had come from the very nation of Jesus, from his own countrymen, and from the highest authority among the people. As such it demanded consideration, and Pilate besought him to tell him what he had done; that is, what there had been in his conduct that had given occasion for this charge.

36. *My kingdom, &c.* The charge on which Jesus was arraigned was that of laying claim to the office of a king. He here substantially admits that he did claim to be a king, but not in the sense in which the Jews understood it. They

Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and

for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear <sup>1</sup> witness unto the truth. Every one <sup>2</sup> that is of the truth heareth my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lv. 4. Rev. i. 5; iii. 14. <sup>2</sup> Ch. viii. 47. 1 John. iv. 6.

charged him with attempting to set up an earthly kingdom, and of exciting sedition against Caesar. In reply to this, Jesus says that *his kingdom is not of this world*. That is, it is not of the same nature as earthly kingdoms. It is not originated for the same purpose, or conducted on the same plan. He immediately adds a circumstance in which they differ. The kingdoms of this world are defended by arms; they maintain armies and engage in wars. If the kingdom of Jesus had been of this kind, he would have excited the multitudes that followed him to prepare for battle. He would have armed the host that attended him to Jerusalem. He would not have been alone and unarmed in the garden of Gethsemane. But though he was a king, yet his dominion was over the heart, subduing evil passions and corrupt desires, and bringing the soul to the love of peace and unity. ¶ *Not from hence*. That is, not from this world.

37. *Art thou a king then?* Dost thou admit the charge in any sense, or dost thou lay claim to a kingdom of any kind? ¶ *Thou sayest*, &c. This is a form of expression denoting affirmation. It is equivalent to yes. ¶ *That I am a king*. This does not mean simply that Pilate affirmed that he was a king. It does not appear that Pilate had done this. But it means, Thou affirmest the truth, thou declarest what is correct, for I am a king. I am a king in a certain sense, and do not deny it. ¶ *To this end*, &c. Compare ch. iii. 11, 12, &c. Jesus does not here affirm that he was born to reign, that this was the design of his coming; but it was to bear witness to and exhibit the truth. By this he showed what was the nature of his kingdom. It was not to assert power, not to collect armies, not to subdue nations in battle. It was simply to present truth to men, and to exercise dominion only by the truth. Hence the only power put forth in restraining the wicked, in convincing the sinner, in con-

verting the heart, in guiding and leading his people, and in sanctifying them, is that which produced by applying truth to the mind. Men are not forced or compelled to be Christians. They are made to see that they are sinners, that God is merciful, that they need a Redeemer, and that the Lord Jesus is a Saviour fitted to their case, and yield themselves then wholly to his reign. This is all the power ever used in the kingdom of Christ, and no men in his church have a right to use any other. Alas! how little have persecutors remembered this! and how often, under the pretence of great regard for the kingdom of Jesus, have bigots attempted, by force and flames, to make all men think as they do! We see here the importance which Jesus attached to the truth. It was his sole business in coming into the world. He had no other end than to establish it. We, therefore, should value it, and seek for it as for hid treasures. Prov. xxiii. 23. ¶ *Every one*, &c. See chap. viii. 47.

38. *What is truth?* This question was probably asked in contempt, and hence Jesus did not answer it. Had the question been sincere, and had Pilate really sought it as Nicodemus did, ch. iii., Jesus would not have hesitated to have explained to him the nature of his kingdom. They were now alone in the judgment-hall, ver. 33, and as soon as Pilate had asked the question, without waiting for an answer, he went out. It is evident that he was satisfied, from the answer of Jesus, ver. 36, 37, that he was not a king in the sense in which the Jews accused him, that he would not endanger the Roman government, and consequently that he was innocent of the charge alleged against him. He regarded him clearly as a fanatic; poor, ignorant, and deluded, but innocent, and not dangerous. Hence he sought to release him, and hence in contempt he asked him this question, and immediately went out, not expecting an answer. This question had long agitated

is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all*.

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

### CHAPTER XIX.

*Jesus scourged and mocked, 1—5. Pilate's reluctance to condemn him, 6—15. The crucifixion, 16—24. The women at the cross, 25—27. Christ's death, 28—37; and burial, 38—42.*

the world. It was the great subject of inquiry in all the schools of the Greeks. Different sects of philosophers had held different opinions; and Pilate now in derision asked him, whom he esteemed an ignorant fanatic, whether he could solve this long agitated question. He might have had an answer. Had he patiently waited in sincerity, Jesus would have told him what it was. Thousands ask the question in the same way. They have a fixed contempt for the Bible; they deride the instructions of religion; they are unwilling to investigate, and to wait at the gates of wisdom; and hence, like Pilate, they remain ignorant of the great Source of truth, and die in darkness and in error. All might find truth if they would seek it; none ever will find it if they do not apply for it to the great Source of Light, the God of Truth, and seek it patiently in the way which he has chosen to communicate it to mankind. How highly should we prize the Bible! and how patiently and prayerfully should we search the scriptures, that we may not err, and die for ever! See Note, ch. xiv. 6. ¶ *I find in him no fault.* See Luke xiii. 4.

39, 40. See Note, Matt. xxvii. 15—20.

### CHAPTER XIX.

1—3. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 26—30.

**T**HEN<sup>1</sup> Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged<sup>2</sup> him.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns,<sup>3</sup> and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that<sup>4</sup> I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvii. 26—33. Mark xv. 15—20.  
<sup>2</sup> Isa. liii. 5. <sup>3</sup> Psa. xxii. 6. Isa. xlii. 7; liii. 3. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 6; ch. xviii. 38.

4. *Behold, I bring him forth, &c.* Pilate, after examining Jesus, had gone forth and declared to the Jews that he found no fault in him. Ch. xviii. 38. At that time Jesus remained in the judgment hall. The Jews were not satisfied with that, but demanded still that he should be put to death. Ch. xviii. 39, 40. Pilate, disposed to gratify the Jews, returned to Jesus, and ordered him to be scourged, as if preparatory to death. Ch. xix. 1. The patience and meekness with which Jesus bore this, seem to have convinced him still more that he was innocent, and he again went forth to declare his conviction, and to do this more effectually, he said, *Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know.* That they might themselves see, and be satisfied, as he had been, of his innocence. All this shows his anxiety to release him, and also shows that the meekness, purity, and sincerity of Jesus, had power to convince a Roman governor that he was not guilty. Thus the highest evidence was given that the charges were false, even when he was condemned to die.

5. *Behold the man.* It is probable that Pilate pointed to the Saviour, and his object evidently was to move them to compassion, and to convince them, by a sight of the Saviour himself, that he was innocent. Hence he brought him forth with the crown of thorns, and the

purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man !

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. *Pilate* saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him : for I find no fault in him.

<sup>1</sup> Lam. i. 12. Heb. xii. 2.

purple robe, and with the marks of scourging. Amidst all this, Jesus was meek, patient, and calm, giving evident proofs of innocence. The conduct of Pilate was as if he had said, See ! The man whom you accuse is arrayed in a gorgeous robe, as if a king. He has been scourged and mocked. All this he has borne with patience. See ! How calm and peaceful ! Behold his countenance ! How mild ! His body scourged, his head pierced with thorns ! Yet in all this he is meek and patient ! This is the man that you accuse ; and he is now brought forth, that you may see that he is not guilty.

6. *They cried out, Crucify him, &c.* The view of the Saviour's meekness only exasperated them the more. They had resolved on his death ; and as they saw Pilate disposed to acquit him, they redoubled their cries, and endeavoured to gain by tumult, and clamour, and terror, what they saw they could not obtain by justice. When men are determined on evil, they cannot be reasoned with. Every argument tends to defeat their plans ; and they press on in iniquity with the more earnestness in proportion as sound reasons are urged to stay their course. Thus sinners go in the way of wickedness down to death. They make up in resolvedness of purpose what they lack in reason ; they are more fixed in their plans in proportion as God faithfully warns them, and their friends admonish them. ¶ *Take ye him, &c.* These are evidently the words of a man weary with their importunity, and with the subject, and yet resolved not to sanction their conduct. It was not the act of a judge delivering him up according to the forms of the law, for they did not understand it so. It was equivalent to this : " I am satisfied of his innocence, and shall not pronounce the sentence of death. If you are bent on his ruin, if you are determined to put to death an

7 The Jews answered him, We have <sup>2</sup> a law, and by our law he ought to die, because <sup>3</sup> he made himself the Son of God.

8 ¶ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid ;

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xxiv. 16. Deut. xviii. 20. <sup>2</sup> Ch. v. 18 ; viii. 58, 59 ; x. 33.

innocent man, if my judgment does not satisfy you, take him and put him to death on your own responsibility, and take the consequences. It cannot be done with my consent, nor in the due form of law. And if done, it must be by you, without authority, and in the face of justice." See Matt. xxvii. 24.

7. *We have a law.* The law respecting blasphemy. Lev. xxiv. 16. Deut. xiii. 1—5. They had arraigned Jesus on that charge before the sanhedrim, and condemned him for it. Matt. xxvi. 63—65. But this was not the charge on which they had arraigned him before Pilate. They had accused him of sedition. Luke xxiii. 2. On this charge they were now convinced that they could not get Pilate to condemn him. He declared him innocent. Still bent on his ruin, and resolved to gain their purpose, they now, contrary to their first intention, added the original accusation on which they had already pronounced him guilty. If they could not obtain his condemnation as a rebel, they now sought it as a blasphemer, and they appealed to Pilate to sanction what they believed was required in their law. Thus to Pilate himself it became more manifest that he was innocent, that they had attempted to deceive him, and that the charge on which they had arraigned him was a mere pretence to obtain his sanction to their wicked design. ¶ *Made himself.* Declared himself, or claimed to be. ¶ *The Son of God.* The law did not forbid this, but it forbade blasphemy, and they considered the assumption of this title as the same as blasphemy, ch. x. 30, 33, 36, and therefore condemned him.

8. *That saying.* That they had accused him of blasphemy. As this was not the charge on which they had arraigned him before his bar, he had not before heard it, and it now convinced him



9 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But <sup>1</sup> Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? know-

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxviii. 13. Isa. liii. 7. Matt. xxvii. 12, 14. Phil. i. 28.

more of their malignity and wickedness. ¶ *He was the more afraid.* What was the ground of his fear is not declared by the evangelist. It was probably, however, the alarm of his conscience, and the fear of vengeance if he suffered such an act of injustice to be done as to put an innocent man to death. He was convinced of the innocence of Jesus. He saw more and more clearly the design of the Jews. And it is not improbable that a heathen, who believed that the gods often manifested themselves to men, dreaded their vengeance if he suffered one who claimed to be divine, and who might be, to be put to death. It is clear that Pilate was convinced that Jesus was innocent; and in this state of agitation, between the convictions of his own conscience, and the clamours of the Jews, and the fear of vengeance, and the certainty that he would do wrong if he gave him up, he was thrown into this state of alarm, and resolved again to question Jesus, that he might obtain satisfaction on the subjects that agitated his mind.

9. *Whence art thou?* See Note, ch. vii. 27. Pilate knew that he was a Galilean, but this question was asked to ascertain whether he claimed to be the Son of God; whether he represented himself as a mere man, or as divine. ¶ *Jesus gave him no answer.* Probably for the following reasons: 1. He had already told him his design, and the nature of his kingdom. Ch. xviii. 36, 37. 2. He had said enough to satisfy him of his innocence. Of that Pilate was convinced. His duty was clear, and if he had had firmness to do it, he would not have asked this question. Jesus, by his silence, therefore, rebuked his want of firmness, and his unwillingness to do what his conscience told him was right. 3. It is not probable that Pilate would have understood him if he had declared to him the truth about his origin, and about his being

est <sup>2</sup> thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

11 Jesus answered, Thou <sup>3</sup> couldst have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 39. Dan. iii. 14, 15; v. 12. <sup>3</sup> Ch. vii. 30. Luke xxii. 53. Exod. ix. 14—16. 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

the Son of God. 4. After what had been done, after he had satisfied Pilate of his innocence, and then had been beaten and mocked by his permission, he had no reason to expect justice at his hands, and therefore he properly declined to make any further defence. By this the prophecy, Isa. liii. 7, was remarkably fulfilled.

10. *Speakest thou not?* &c. This is the expression of a man of pride. He was not accustomed to meet with silence like this. He endeavoured, therefore, to address the fears of Jesus, and to appal him with the declaration that his life was at his disposal, and that his safety depended on his favour. This arrogance called forth the reply of the Saviour, and he told him that he had no power except what was given him from above. Jesus was not, therefore, to be intimidated by any claim of power in Pilate. His life was not in his hands, and he could not stoop to ask the favour of a man.

11. *No power.* No such power as you claim. You have not originated the power which you have. You have just as much as is given, and your ability extends no farther. ¶ *Except it were given thee.* It has been conceded or granted to you. God has ordered your life, your circumstances, and the extent of your dominion. This was a reproof of a proud man in office, who was forgetful of the great Source of all his authority, and who supposed that by his own talents or fortune he had risen to his present place. Alas! how many men in office forget that God gives them their rank, and vainly think that it is owing to their own talents or merit, that they have risen to that elevation. Men of office and talent, as well as others, should remember that God gives them what they have, and that they have no influence except as it is conceded to them from on high. ¶ *From above.* From God, or by his direction, and by the arrangements of his providence. Rom.

above : <sup>1</sup> therefore he <sup>2</sup> that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.<sup>3</sup>

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him : but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxix. 9. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xviii. 3. Mark xlv. 44. <sup>3</sup> Heb. vi. 4—8. Jas. iv. 17.

xiii. 1. The words, *from above*, often refer to God or to heaven. Ch. iii. 3, Greek. Jas. i. 17; iii. 15, 17. The providence of God was remarkable in so ordering affairs, that a man, flexible and yielding like Pilate, should be entrusted with power in Judea. Had it been a man firm and unyielding in his duty, one who could not be terrified or awed by the multitude, Jesus would not have been delivered to be crucified. Acts ii. 23. God thus brings about his wise ends ; and while Pilate was free, and acted out his nature without compulsion, yet the purposes of God, long before predicted, were fulfilled, and Jesus made an atonement for the sins of the world. Thus God overrules the wickedness and folly of men. He so orders affairs that the true character of men shall be brought out, and makes use of that character to advance his own great purpose. ¶ *Therefore*. On this account. You are a magistrate. Your power as such is given you by God. You are not, indeed, guilty for accusing me, or malignantly arraigning me. But you have power entrusted to you over my life, and the Jews, who knew this, and who knew that the power of a magistrate was given to him by God, have the greater sin for seeking my condemnation before a tribunal appointed by God, and for endeavouring to obtain so solemn a sanction to their own malignant and wicked purposes. They have endeavoured to avail themselves of the civil power, the sacred appointment of God, and on this account their sin is greater. This does not mean that their sin was greater than that of Pilate, though that was true ; but their sin was greater on account of the fact that they perseveringly and malignantly endeavoured to obtain the sanction of the magistrate to their wicked proceedings. Nor does it mean that because God had purposed his death, Acts ii. 23, and given power to Pilate, that

man go, thou art not Caesar's friend : whosoever <sup>4</sup> maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

13 ¶ When <sup>5</sup> Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judg-

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxiii. 2. Acts xvii. 7. <sup>5</sup> Prov. xxix. 25. Acts iv. 19.

therefore their sin was greater, for God's purpose in the case made their act neither better nor worse. It did not change the nature of their free acts. This passage teaches no such doctrine, but that their sin was aggravated by malignantly endeavouring to obtain the sanction of a magistrate who was invested with authority by God, and who wielded the power that God gave him. By this Pilate ought to have been convinced, and was convinced, of their wickedness ; and hence, he sought more and more to release him. ¶ *He that delivered me*. The singular, here, is put for the plural, including Judas, the high priests, and the sanhedrim.

12. *Sought to release him*. He was more and more convinced of his innocence, and more unwilling to yield him to mere malice and envy in the face of justice. ¶ *But the Jews cried out, &c.* This moved Pilate to deliver Jesus into their hands. He feared that he would be accused of unfaithfulness to the interests of the Roman emperor if he did not condemn a man whom his own nation had accused of sedition. The Roman emperor then on the throne was exceedingly jealous and tyrannical, and the fear of losing his favour induced Pilate to deliver Jesus into their hands. ¶ *Caesar's friend*. The friend of the Roman emperor. The name of the reigning emperor was Tiberius. After the time of Julius Caesar, all the emperors were called Caesar, as all the kings of Egypt were called Pharaoh. This emperor, during the latter part of his reign, was the most cruel, jealous, and wicked that ever sat on the Roman throne.

13. *Judgment-seat*. The tribunal or place of pronouncing sentence. He came here to deliver him, in due form of law, into the hands of the Jews. ¶ *Pavement*. This was an area or room of the judgment hall, whose door was made of small square stones of various colours. This

ment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

14 And <sup>1</sup> it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We <sup>2</sup> have no king but Cæsar.

16 Then <sup>3</sup> delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

17 And he bearing his cross went <sup>4</sup> forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 ¶ And Pilate wrote a title,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvii. 62. <sup>2</sup> Gen. xlix. 10. <sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvii. 26—33. Mark xv. 15—23. Luke xxiii. 24—26. <sup>4</sup> Num. xv. 36. Heb. xiii. 12.

was common in palaces and houses of wealth and splendour. See Notes on Matt. ix. 2. ¶ *Gabbatha*. This word is not elsewhere used. It comes from a word signifying to be elevated. The name given to the place by the Hebrews was conferred from its being the place of the tribunal, as an elevated place.

14. *The preparation of the passover*. See Note, Mark xv. 42. ¶ *The sixth hour*. Twelve o'clock. Mark says, ch. xv. 25, that it was the third hour. See the difficulty explained in the Note on that place.

16—22. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 32—37.

22. *What I have written, &c.* This declaration implied that he would make no change. He was impatient, and weary of their solicitations. He had yielded to them contrary to the convictions of his own judgment, and he now declared his purpose to yield no further.

and put it on the cross.<sup>5</sup> And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was high to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

23 ¶ Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam,<sup>6</sup> woven<sup>7</sup> from the top through-out.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be:

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxvii. 37. Mark xv. 26. Luke xxiii. 38. <sup>6</sup> Or, wrought. <sup>7</sup> Exod. xxxix. 22.

23. *His garments*. The plural here is used to denote the outer garment. It was made, commonly, so as to be easily thrown on or off; and when they laboured or walked, it was girded about the loins. See Note, Matt. v. 40. ¶ *Four parts*. It seems, from this, that there were four soldiers employed as his executioners. ¶ *His coat*. His under garment, called the tunic. ¶ *Was without seam*. Josephus, Ant. lib. iii. cap. viii. § 4, says of the garment or coat of the high priest, that "This vesture was not composed of two pieces, nor was it sewed together upon the shoulders and the sides, but it was one long vestment, so woven as to have an aperture for the neck. It was also parted where the hands were to come out." It seems that the Lord Jesus, the great High Priest of his people, had also a coat made in a similar manner. Compare Exod. xxxix. 22.

24. *Let us not rend it*. It would then

that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, <sup>1</sup> They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

• 25 ¶ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of <sup>2</sup> Cleophas, <sup>3</sup> and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, <sup>4</sup> whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, <sup>5</sup> behold thy son!

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxii. 18. <sup>2</sup> Or, Cleopas. <sup>3</sup> Luke xxiv. 16. <sup>4</sup> Ch. xiii. 23. <sup>5</sup> Ch. ii. 4.

have been useless. The outer garment being composed of several parts, fringes, borders, &c. Deut. xxii. 12, could be easily divided. ¶ *That the scripture, &c.* Ps. xxii. 18.

26. *The disciple—whom he loved.* See ch. xiii. 23. ¶ *Woman.* This appellation certainly implied no disrespect. See Note, ch. ii. 4. ¶ *Behold thy son!* This refers to John, not to Jesus himself. Behold! my beloved disciple shall be to you a son, and provide for you, and discharge towards you the duties of an affectionate child. Mary was poor. It would even seem that now she had no home. Jesus, in his dying moments, filled with tender regard for his mother, secured for her an adopted son, obtained for her a home, and consoled her grief by the prospect of attention from him who was the most beloved of all the apostles. What an example of filial attention! What a model to all children! And how lovely appears the dying Saviour thus remembering his afflicted mother, and making her welfare one of his last cares, even on the cross, and even when making atonement for the sins of the world.

27. *Behold thy mother!* One who is to be to thee as a mother. The fact that she was the mother of Jesus would secure the kindness of John; and the fact that she was now entrusted to him, demanded of him affectionate regard and tender care. ¶ *From that hour, &c.* John seems to have been in better circumstances than the other apostles. See ch. xviii. 16. Tradition says that she conti-

27 Then saith he to the disciple. Behold thy mother! <sup>6</sup> And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own <sup>7</sup> home.

28 ¶ After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture <sup>8</sup> might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim. v. 2. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xvi. 32. <sup>8</sup> Ps. lxxix. 21.

nued to live with him in Judea till the time of her death, which occurred fifteen years after the death of Christ.

28—30. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 46—50. ¶ *That the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.* See Ps. lxxix. 21. Thirst was one of the most distressing circumstances attending the crucifixion. The wounds were highly inflamed, and a raging fever was caused usually by the sufferings on the cross, and this was accompanied by insupportable thirst. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 34. A mameluke, or Turkish officer, was crucified, it is said, in an Arabic manuscript recently translated, on the banks of the river Barada, under the castle of Damascus. He was nailed to the cross on Friday, and remained till Sunday noon, when he died. After giving an account of the crucifixion, the narrator proceeds, "I have heard this from one who witnessed it, and he thus remained till he died, patient and silent, without wailing, but looking around him to the right and the left upon the people. But he begged for water, and none was given him; and the hearts of the people were melted with compassion for him, and with pity on one of God's creatures, who, yet a boy, was suffering under so grievous a trial. In the mean time the water was flowing around him, and he gazed upon it, and longed for one drop of it, and he complained of thirst all the first day, after which he was silent, for God gave him strength."—*Wiseman's Lectures*, vol. i. p. 265. 3rd. Edition.

30. It is finished. The sufferings and

received the vinegar, he said, It <sup>1</sup> is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave <sup>2</sup> up the ghost.

31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, <sup>3</sup> that the bodies should not remain <sup>4</sup> upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for <sup>5</sup> that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvii. 4. <sup>2</sup> Isa. liii. 10, 12. Heb. ii. 14, 15. <sup>3</sup> Ver. 42. <sup>4</sup> Deut. xxi. 23. <sup>5</sup> Lev. xxiii. 7, 8.

agonies in redeeming man are over. The work long contemplated, long promised, long expected by prophets and saints, is done. The toils in the ministry, the persecutions and mockeries, and the pangs of the garden and the cross, are ended, and man is redeemed. What a wonderful declaration was this! How full of consolation to man! And how should this dying declaration of the Saviour reach every heart and affect every soul!

31. *The preparation.* Ver. 14. ¶ *That the bodies, &c.* The law required that the bodies of those who were hung should not remain suspended during the night. See Deut. xxi. 22, 23. That law was made when the punishment by crucifixion was unknown, and when those who were suspended would almost immediately expire. In the punishment by crucifixion, life was lengthened out for four, five, or eight days. The Jews, therefore, requested that death might be hastened, and that the land might not be polluted by bodies remaining suspended on the sabbath day. ¶ *Was an high day.* It was, 1. The sabbath. 2. It was the day on which the paschal feast properly commenced. It was called a *high day* because that year the feast of the passover commenced on the sabbath. (Greek, "great day.") ¶ *Their legs might be broken.* To hasten their death. The effect of this while they were suspended on the cross would be to increase their pain by the act of breaking them, and to deprive their body of the support which it received from the feet, and to throw the whole weight on the hands. By this increased torment their lives were soon ended.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood <sup>6</sup> and water.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Heb. ix. 22, 23. 1 John v. 6, 8. <sup>7</sup> Psa. li. 7. Zech. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Lactantius says that this was commonly done by the Romans to persons who were crucified. Persons crucified would live several days. To compensate for those lingering agonies, so that the full amount of suffering might be endured, they increased their sufferings by breaking their limbs, and thus hastening their death.

33. *Saw that he was dead.* Saw by the indications of death on his person, and perhaps by the testimony of the centurion. Matt. xxvii. 54. The death of Jesus was doubtless hastened by the intense agony of the garden, and the peculiar sufferings endured as an atonement for sin on the cross. Compare Matt. xxvii. 46.

34. *One of the soldiers.* One of those appointed to watch the bodies till they were dead. This man appears to have doubted whether he was dead, and in order to see whether he was not yet sensible, he pierced him with his spear. The Jews designed that his legs should be broken, but this was prevented by the providence of God. Yet in another way, more satisfactory proof was obtained of his death than would have been given by breaking his legs. This was so ordered, no doubt, that there might be the fullest proof that he was truly dead; that it could not be pretended that he had swooned away and revived, and that, therefore, there could not be the least doubt of his resurrection to life. ¶ *With a spear.* The common spear which soldiers used in war. There can be no doubt that such a stroke from the strong arm of a Roman soldier would have caused death, if Jesus had not been

35 And<sup>1</sup> he that saw it bare record, and his record is true : and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

<sup>1</sup> 1 John i. 1—3.

already dead ; and it was, doubtless, to furnish this conclusive proof that he was actually dead, and that an atonement had thus been made for mankind, that John mentions so particularly this fact. Let the following circumstances be remembered, showing that death must have ensued from such a wound. 1. The Saviour was elevated but a little from the ground, so as to be easily reached by the spear of a soldier. 2. The wound must have been transversely upwards, so as to have penetrated into the body, as he could not have stood directly under him. 3. It was probably made with a strong arm, and with violence. 4. The spear of the Roman soldier was a lance which tapered very gently to a point, and would penetrate easily. 5. The wound was comparatively a large wound. It was so large as to admit the hand. Ch. xx. 27. But for a lance thus tapering to have made a wound so wide as to admit the hand, it must have been at least four or five inches in depth and moreover must have made death certain. If it be remembered that this blow was probably in the left side, the conclusion is inevitable that death would have been the consequence of such a blow. To make out this fact was of special importance probably in the time of John, as the reality of the death of Jesus was denied by the Gnostics, many of whom maintained that he died in appearance only. ¶ *Pierced his side.* Which side is not mentioned ; nor can it be certainly known. The common opinion is, that it was the left side. Car. Frid. Gruner (Commentatio Antiquaria Medica de Jesu Christi Morte, pp. 30—36, Halle 1805) has attempted to show that it must have been the left side. See Wiseman's Lectures, vol. i. 261, 3rd edition, and Kuinoel on John xix. 34, where the arguments of Gruner are fully stated. It is clear that the spear pierced to the region of the heart. ¶ *And forthwith came,* &c. This was evidently a natural effect of thus piercing the side. Such a flowing of blood and water make it probable that the spear reached the heart, and if Jesus had not before been dead, this would have closed his life. The heart

is surrounded by a membrane called the pericardium. This membrane contains a serous matter or liquor resembling water, which prevents the surface of the heart from becoming dry by its continual motion. It was this which was pierced, and from which the water flowed. The point of the spear also reached one of the ventricles of the heart, and the blood yet warm rushed forth either mingled with or followed by the water of the pericardium, so as to appear to John to be blood and water flowing together. This was a natural effect, and would follow in any other case. Commentators have almost uniformly supposed that this was significant ; as e. g. that the blood was an emblem of the eucharist, and the water of baptism, or that the blood denoted justification, and the water sanctification. But that this was the design there is not the slightest evidence. It was strictly a natural result, adduced by John to establish one fact on which the whole of Christianity turns—that Jesus was truly dead. On this depends the doctrine of the atonement, of his resurrection, and all the prominent doctrines of religion. This fact it was of importance to prove, that it might not be pretended that he had only suffered a syncope, or had fainted. This John establishes. He shows that those who were sent to hasten his death believed that he had expired ; that then a soldier inflicted a wound which would have terminated life, if he had not been already dead ; and that the infliction of this wound was followed by the fullest proof that he had truly expired. On this fact the evangelist dwells with the interest which became a subject of so much importance to the world, and thus laid the foundation for undoubted assurance that the Lord Jesus died for the sins of men.

35. *He that saw it.* John himself. He is accustomed to speak of himself in the third person. ¶ *His record is true.* His testimony is true. Such was the known character of this writer, such his sacred regard for truth, that he could appeal to that with full assurance that all would put confidence in him. He often appeals thus to the fact that his testimony was

36 For these things were done, that the scripture <sup>1</sup> should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another scripture saith,<sup>2</sup> They shall look on him whom they pierced.

38 ¶ And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for <sup>3</sup> fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also <sup>4</sup> Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and <sup>5</sup> brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound <sup>6</sup> it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden;

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii. 46. Num. ix. 12. Psa. xxxiv. 20. <sup>2</sup> Psa. xxii. 16. Zech. xii. 10. Rev. i. 7. <sup>3</sup> Ch. ix. 22; xii. 42. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 1, 2; vii. 50. <sup>5</sup> 2 Ch. xvi. 14. <sup>6</sup> Acts v. 6.

known to be true. It would be well if all Christians had such a character that their word would be assuredly believed.

36. *That the scripture might be fulfilled.* See Exod. xii. 46. John here regards the paschal lamb as an emblem of Christ; and as in the law it was commanded that a bone of that lamb should not be broken, so in the providence of God it was ordered that a bone of the Saviour should not be broken. The scripture thus received a complete fulfilment respecting both the type and the antitype. Some have supposed, however, that John referred to Psa. xxxiv. 20.

37. *Another scripture.* Zech. xii. 10. We must here be struck with the wonderful providence of God, that so many scriptures were fulfilled in the death of Christ. All these things happened without design on the part of the men em-

and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There<sup>7</sup> laid they Jesus therefore because <sup>8</sup> of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Mary at the sepulchre, 1, 2. Peter and John also, 3—10. Christ seen by Mary, 11—18; by the disciples, 19—23. Thomas incredulous, but convinced, 24—29. Design of this gospel, 30, 31.*

THE <sup>9</sup> first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom <sup>10</sup> Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

3 Peter <sup>11</sup> therefore went forth,

<sup>7</sup> Isa. liii. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 4. <sup>8</sup> Ver. 31. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xxviii. 1—8. Mark xvi. 1—8. Luke xxiv. 1—12. <sup>10</sup> Ch. xiii. 23; xix. 26; xxi. 7, 24. <sup>11</sup> Luke xxiv. 12.

gaged; but whatever was done by Jew or Gentile tended to the fulfilment of prophecies long on record, and with which the Jews themselves ought to have been familiar. Little did they suppose when delivering him to Pilate, when he was mocked, when they parted his garments, when they pierced him, that they were fulfilling ancient predictions. But in this way God had so ordered it, that the firmest foundation is laid for the belief that he was the true Messiah, and that the designs of wicked men shall all be overruled to the fulfilment of the great plans which God had in sending his Son.

38—42. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 57—62.

## CHAPTER XX.

1—12. For an account of the resurrection of Christ, see Notes on Matt. xxviii.

and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun <sup>1</sup> Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; <sup>2</sup> yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

7 And the napkin, <sup>3</sup> that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, <sup>4</sup> that he must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

11 ¶ But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked into* <sup>5</sup> the sepulchre,

<sup>1</sup> Luke xiii. 30. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xix. 40. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xi. 44. <sup>4</sup> Psa. xvi. 10. Acts ii. 25—31; xiii. 34, 35. <sup>5</sup> Mark xvi. 5.

9. *The scripture.* See Luke xxiv. 26, 46. The sense or meaning of the various predictions that foretold his death, as e. g.: Psa. ii. 7. Compare Acts xiii. 33. Psa. xvi. 9, 10. Compare Acts ii. 25—32. Psa. cx. 1. Compare Acts ii. 34, 35.

13. *They have taken away.* That is, the disciples or friends of Jesus who had laid him there. Perhaps it was understood that the body was deposited there only to remain over the sabbath, with an intention then of removing it to some other place of burial. Hence they hastened early in the morning to make preparation, and Mary supposed they had arrived before her, and had taken him away.

12 And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and <sup>6</sup> saw Jesus standing, and knew not <sup>7</sup> that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I <sup>8</sup> will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, <sup>9</sup> Mary. She turned <sup>10</sup> herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my <sup>11</sup> brethren, and say unto them, <sup>12</sup> I ascend

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxviii. 9. Mark xvi. 2. <sup>7</sup> Ch. xxi. 4. Luke xxiv. 16, 31. <sup>8</sup> Cant. iii. 2. <sup>9</sup> Ch. x. 3. Isa. xlii. 1. <sup>10</sup> Cant. iii. 4. <sup>11</sup> Psa. xxii. 22. Rom. viii. 29. Heb. ii. 11. <sup>12</sup> Ch. xvi. 28.

14. *Knew not that it was Jesus.* She was not expecting to see him. It was yet also twilight, and she could not see distinctly.

16. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary.* This was spoken doubtless in a tone of voice that at once recalled him to her recollection. ¶ *Rabboni.* This is a Hebrew word denoting master. It was at once an expression of her joy, and an acknowledgment of him as her Lord and Master. It is not improbable that, filled with joy, she was about to cast herself at his feet.

17. *Touch me not, &c.* This passage has given rise to a variety of interpretations. Jesus required Thomas to touch him, ver. 27, and it has been difficult to ascertain why he forbade this now to Mary.



unto my Father, and <sup>1</sup> your Father; and to my <sup>2</sup> God, and your <sup>3</sup> God.

18 Mary Magdalene came <sup>4</sup> and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 14, 15. <sup>2</sup> Cor. vi. 18. Gal. iii. 26 : iv. 6, 7. <sup>3</sup> Eph. i. 17. <sup>4</sup> Gen. xvii. 7, 8. Psa. xliii. 4, 5; xlviii. 14. Isa. xli. 10. Jer. xxxi. 33. Ezek. xxxvi. 28. Zech. xiii. 9. Heb. xi. 16. Rev. xxi. 3. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xxviii. 10.

The reason why he directed Thomas to do this was, that he doubted whether his master had been restored to life. Mary did not doubt. The reason why he forbade her to touch him now is to be sought in the circumstances of the case. Mary, filled with joy and gratitude, was about to prostrate herself at his feet, disposed to remain with him, and offer him there her homage as her risen Lord. This is probably included in the word *touch* in this place. And the language of Jesus may mean this: Do not approach me now for this purpose. Do not delay here. Other opportunities will yet be afforded to see me. I have not yet ascended, that is, I am not about to ascend immediately, but shall remain yet on earth to afford opportunity to my disciples to enjoy my presence. From Matt. xxviii. 9, it appears that the women, when they met Jesus, held him by the feet and worshipped him. This species of adoration it was probably the intention of Mary to offer, and this, at that time, Jesus forbade, and directed her to go at once and give his disciples notice that he had risen. ¶ *My brethren.* See ch. xv. 15. ¶ *My Father, and your Father, &c.* Nothing was better fitted to afford them consolation than this assurance that his God was theirs, and that though he had been slain, they were still indissolubly united in attachment to the same Father and God.

19. *The same day at evening.* On the first day of the week, the day of the resurrection of Christ. ¶ *When the doors were shut.* This does not mean that the doors were fastened, though that might have been the case, but only that they were closed. Jesus had been taken from them, and it was natural that they should apprehend that the Jews would next attempt to wreak their vengeance on his

19 ¶ Then <sup>5</sup> the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

<sup>5</sup> Mark xvi. 14. Luke xxiv. 36. 1 Cor. xv. 5.

followers. Hence they met in the evening, and with closed doors, lest the Jews should bring against them the same charge of sedition that they had against the Lord Jesus. It is not said what was the object of their assembling, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was to talk over the events which had just occurred, to deliberate about their condition, and to engage in acts of worship. Their minds were doubtless much agitated. They had seen their Master taken away and put to death. But a part of their number also had affirmed that they had seen him alive. In this state of things they naturally came together in a time and place of safety. It was not uncommon for the early Christians to hold their meetings for worship in the night. In times of persecution they were forbidden to assemble during the day, and hence they were compelled to meet in the night. Pliny the Younger, writing to Trajan, the Roman emperor, and giving an account of Christians, says, that "They were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as God." True Christians will love to meet together for worship. Nothing will prevent this. And one of the evidences of piety is a desire to assemble to hear the word of God, and to offer to him prayer and praise. It is worthy of remark that this is the first assembly that was convened for worship on the Lord's day, and in that assembly Jesus was present. Since that time, the day has been observed in the church as the Christian sabbath, particularly to commemorate the resurrection of Christ. ¶ *Came Jesus, &c.* There is no evidence that he came into their assembly in any miraculous manner. For any thing that appears to the contrary, Jesus entered in the usual way and manner, though his

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his hands* and *his side*. Then <sup>1</sup> were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace <sup>2</sup> be unto you: as *my Father* hath sent me, even so <sup>3</sup> send I you.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 22. Ch. xiv. 27. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xvii. 18. Matt. xxviii. 19. <sup>2</sup> Tim. ii. 2. Heb. iii. 1.

sudden appearance occasioned alarm. ¶ *Peace be unto you.* The sudden manner of his appearance, and the fact that most of them had not before seen him since his resurrection, tended to alarm them. Hence he addressed them in the usual form of salutation to allay their fears, and to assure them that it was their own Saviour and Friend.

20. *He showed unto them his hands, &c.* In this manner he gave them indubitable proofs of his identity. He showed them that he was the same Being who had suffered; that he had truly risen from the dead, and had come forth with the same body. That body had not yet put on its glorified form. It was necessary first to establish the proof of his resurrection, and that could be done only by his appearing as he was when he died.

21. *As my Father has sent me.* As God sent me to preach, to be persecuted, and to suffer, to make known his will, and to offer pardon to men, so I send you. This is the design and the extent of the commission of the ministers of the Lord Jesus. He is their model. And they will be successful only as they study his character, and imitate his example. This commission he proceeds to confirm by endowing them all with the gift of the Holy Ghost.

22. *He breathed on them.* It was customary for the prophets to use some significant act to represent the nature of their message. See Jer. xlii. xlviii. &c. In this case the act of breathing was used to represent the nature of the influence that should come upon them, and the source of that influence. When man was created, God breathed into him the breath of life. Gen. ii. 7. The word rendered *Spirit* in the scriptures denotes wind, air, breath, as well as Spirit. Hence the operations of

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive <sup>4</sup> ye the Holy Ghost:

23 Whose soever <sup>5</sup> sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

<sup>4</sup> Acts ii. 4, 38. <sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18.

the Holy Spirit are compared to the wind. Ch. iii. 8. Acts ii. 2. ¶ *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* This was given to them as a certain sign or pledge that they should be endowed with the influences of the Holy Spirit. Compare Acts i. 4. Acts ii.

23. *Whose soever sins, &c.* See Note on Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18. It is worthy of remark here, that Jesus confers the same power on all the apostles. He gives to no one of them any peculiar authority. If Peter, as the Papists pretend, had been appointed to any peculiar authority, it is wonderful that the Saviour did not here hint at any such pre-eminence. This passage conclusively proves that they were invested with equal power in organizing and governing the church. The authority which he had given Peter to preach the gospel first to the Jews and the Gentiles, does not militate against this. See Note, Matt. xvi. 18, 19. This authority given them was full proof that they were inspired. The meaning of the passage is not that man can forgive sins; that belongs only to God, Isa. xliii. 25; but the meaning is that they should be inspired; that, in founding the church and in declaring the will of God, they should be taught by the Holy Ghost to declare on what terms, to what characters, and to what temper of mind, God would extend forgiveness of sins. It was not authority to forgive individuals, but to establish in all the churches the terms and conditions on which men might be pardoned, with a promise that God would confirm all that they taught; that men might have assurance of forgiveness who would comply with those terms; and that those who did not comply should not be forgiven, and their sins should be retained. This commission is as far as possible from the authority which the Roman Catholic

A.D. 33.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Jerusalem.*

24 ¶ But Thomas, <sup>1</sup> one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he <sup>2</sup> said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Tho-

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 11, 28.

claims of remitting sin and of pronouncing pardon.

25. *Except I shall see, &c.* It is not known what was the ground of the incredulity of Thomas. It is probable, however, that this was the effect of deep grief, and of that despondency which fills the mind when a long cherished hope is taken away. In such a case it requires proof of uncommon clearness and strength to overcome the despondency, and to convince us that we may attain the object of our desires. Thomas has been much blamed by expositors, but he asked only for proof that would be satisfactory in his circumstances. The testimony of ten disciples should have been indeed sufficient, but an opportunity was thus given to the Saviour to convince the last of them of the truth of his resurrection. This instance shows, what all the conduct of the apostles proves, that they had not conspired together to impose on the world. Even they were slow to believe, and one of them refused to believe even on the testimony of ten of his brethren. How unlike this to the conduct of men who agree to impose a story on mankind! Many are like Thomas. Many now are unwilling to believe because they do not see the Lord Jesus, and with just as little reason as Thomas had. The testimony of so many apostles, each of whom was willing to lay down his life to attest that he had seen the Lord Jesus alive, who had nothing to gain by imposture, and whose conduct was removed as far as possible from the appearance of imposture, is ample proof of the truth of what they affirmed.

mas with them : *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace <sup>3</sup> be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands ; and reach hither thy hand, <sup>4</sup> and thrust it into my side : and be <sup>5</sup> not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My <sup>6</sup> Lord and my God.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. xxvi. 12.

<sup>4</sup> 1 John i. 1.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim.

i. 14

<sup>6</sup> Ch. v. 23. Psa. cxviii. 28. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

26. *And after eight days.* That is, on the return of the first day of the week. From this it appears that they thus early set apart this day for assembling together, and Jesus countenanced it by appearing twice with them. It was natural that the apostles should observe this day, but not probable that they would do it without the sanction of the Lord Jesus. His repeated presence gave such a sanction, and the historical fact is indisputable that from this time this day was observed as the Christian sabbath. See Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. Rev. i. 10.

28. *My Lord and my God.* In this passage the name God is expressly given to Christ, in his own presence and by one of his own apostles. This declaration has been considered as a clear proof of the divinity of Christ for the following reasons: 1. There is no evidence that this was a mere expression of surprise or astonishment, as some have supposed. 2. The language was addressed to Jesus himself: *Thomas—said unto him.* 3. The Saviour did not reprove him, or check him as using any improper language. If he had not been divine, it is impossible to reconcile it with his honesty that he did not rebuke the disciple. No pious man would have allowed such language to be addressed to him. 4. The Saviour proceeds immediately to commend Thomas for believing. But what was the evidence of his believing? It was this declaration, and this only. If this was a mere exclamation of surprise, what proof was it that Thomas believed? Before this he doubted. Now he believed, and gave utterance to

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed <sup>1</sup> are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 ¶ And <sup>2</sup> many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But <sup>3</sup> these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and <sup>4</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. i. 8. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xxi. 25. <sup>3</sup> Luke i. 4. <sup>4</sup> Ch. iii. 15, 16: v. 24: x. 10. 1 Pet. i. 9.

his belief that Jesus was his Lord and his God. 5. If this was not the meaning of Thomas, then his exclamation was a mere act of profaneness, and the Saviour would not have commended him for taking the name of the Lord his God in vain. The passage proves, therefore, that it is proper to apply to Christ the name Lord and God, and thus it accords with what John affirmed in ch. i. 1, and with what the whole gospel goes to establish.

29. *Because thou hast seen me.* Because you have looked upon my body, and seen the proofs that I am the same Saviour that was crucified. Jesus here approves the faith of Thomas, but more highly commends the faith of those who should believe without having seen. ¶ *Blessed.* Happy, or worthy of the divine approbation. It has here the force of the comparative degree, signifying that they would be, in some respects, more blessed than Thomas. They would evince higher faith. ¶ *That have not seen, &c.* Those who should be convinced by the testimony of the apostles, and by the influences of the Spirit. They would evince strong faith. All faith is of things not seen. And God blesses those most who most implicitly rely on his word.

30. *Other signs.* Other miracles. Many were recorded by the other evangelists, and many which he performed were never recorded. Ch. xxi. 25.

31. *These are written.* Those recorded in this gospel. ¶ *That ye might believe, &c.* This is a clue to the design which John had in view in writing this gospel. The whole scope or end of the book is to accomplish two objects: 1. To

believing ye might have life through his name.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*Jesus seen at the lake of Galilee, 1—14. Peter's love to his Master tested, 15—19. Inquiry about John's death rebuked, 20—25.*

**A**FTER these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias: and on this wise showed he *himself*.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didy-

prove that Jesus was the Messiah, and, 2. That they who looked at the proof might be convinced, and have eternal life. This design is kept in view throughout the book. The miracles, facts, arguments, instructions, and conversations of our Lord all tend to this. This point had not been kept in view so directly by either of the other evangelists, and it was reserved for the last of the apostles to collect those arguments, and make out a connected demonstration that Jesus was the Messiah. If this design of John is kept steadily in view, it will throw much light on the book, and the argument is unanswerable, framed after the strictest rules of reasoning, infinitely beyond the skill of man, and having throughout the clearest evidence of demonstration.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1. *The sea of Tiberias.* Called also the sea of Galilee, being situated in Galilee. In this place Jesus had promised to meet the disciples. Matt. xxvi. 32; xxvii. 10. Mark xiv. 28; xvi. 7. This interview of Jesus is but just mentioned by Matthew, Matt. xxvii. 16, and is omitted by both Mark and Luke. This is the reason why John relates so particularly what occurred there. Galilee was a retired place where they would be free from danger, and was, therefore, a safe and convenient situation for Jesus to meet them, in order to give them his last instructions. ¶ *On this wise.* Thus. In this manner.

2. *There were together.* Probably residing in the same place. While they were waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit, they will find it proper to be

mus, and <sup>1</sup> Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* <sup>2</sup> of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew <sup>3</sup> not that it was Jesus.

5 Then <sup>4</sup> Jesus saith unto them, *Children*, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 45. <sup>2</sup> Matt. iv. 21. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xx. 14.  
<sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv. 41. <sup>5</sup> Or, *Sirs*.

usefully employed. Their Master had been taken away, and the promised Spirit had not descended on them. In this interval they chose not to be idle, and, therefore, returned to their former employment. It is to be remarked also that they had no other means of support. While with Jesus, they were commonly supplied by the kindness of the people. But now when the Saviour had died, they were cut off from this means of support, and returned to the honest labour of their early lives. Ministers of the gospel should be willing to labour, if necessary, for their own support, and should not esteem such labour dishonourable. God has made employment indispensable to man, and if the field of labour is not open in one way, they should seek it in another. If, at any time, the people withhold the supply of their wants, they should be able and willing to seek support in some honest employment.

3. *That night they caught nothing.* This was so ordered in the providence of God, that the miracle which was wrought might appear more remarkable.

4. *Knew not that it was Jesus.* Probably it was yet twilight, and in the distance they could not distinctly recognize him.

5. *Children.* A term of affection and friendship. 1 John ii. 18. ¶ *Any meat?* This word (Greek) means anything eaten

the net <sup>6</sup> on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

<sup>6</sup> Luke v. 4-7.

with bread. It was used by the Greeks especially to denote fish. Schleusner.

6. *On the right side.* Why the *right* side is mentioned is not known. Grotius supposes that it was the side nearest the shore, where there was the less probability of taking fish. It does not appear that they recognized the Lord Jesus, but from some cause they had sufficient confidence in him to make another trial. Perhaps they judged that he was one skilled in that employment, and knew where there was the greatest probability of success.

7. *It is the Lord.* He was convinced perhaps by the apparent miracle, and by looking more attentively on the person of one who had been the means of such unexpected and remarkable success. ¶ *His fisher's coat.* This seems to have been a coarse garment worn over the tunic by fishermen. It is not the word which is used to denote the outer or the inner garment, but a garment employed only for this business. ¶ *He was naked.* He was undressed, with nothing on but the under garment or tunic. The word does not require us to suppose a greater degree of nakedness than this. See Note, Mark xiv. 51. Also 1 Sam. xix. 24. ¶ *Did cast himself into the sea.* With characteristic ardour, desirous of meeting again his Lord, and showing his affection for him.

8. *Two hundred cubits.* About three  
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9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three : <sup>1</sup> and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the dis-

<sup>1</sup> Luke v. 6—8.

hundred and fifty feet, or a little more than twenty rods.

9. *They saw a fire, &c.* We have no knowledge whence this was produced, whether it was, as Grotius supposes, by a miracle, or whether it was a place occupied by other fishermen where they also might cook the fish which they had caught. As no miracle is mentioned, however, there is no reason for supposing that any existed in the case.

11. *An hundred and fifty and three.* The number is mentioned because it seems to have been a very unusual draught, and it was particularly gratifying and striking to them after they had spent the whole night and had caught nothing. This convinced them that it was no other than the same Saviour who had so often worked wonders before them, that was now with them.

12. *Come and dine.* The word in the original means the meal which is taken in the morning, or breakfast.

13. *Jesus then cometh and taketh bread, &c.* It is not said that Jesus himself ate with them, but he gave them food. The design of this interview seems to have been to convince them that he had truly risen from the dead. Hence he performed a miracle before they suspected that it was he, that there might be no room to say that they had ascribed to him the power of the miracle through friendship and collusion with him. The miracle was such as to satisfy them of its truth, and was in accordance with all his works, not for mere display, but for utility. He remained with them, was

ciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus <sup>2</sup> then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This <sup>3</sup> is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 ¶ So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, <sup>4</sup> lovest thou me more than <sup>5</sup> these? He saith unto him,

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxiv. 42, 43. Acts x. 41. <sup>3</sup> Ch. xx. 19, 26. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 16, 17; ch. i. 42. <sup>5</sup> John, Matt. xvi. 17. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvi. 33, 35.

with them at their meal, conversed with them, and thus convinced them that he was the same Friend who had died.

14. *The third time.* See the Harmony of the accounts of the resurrection of Jesus, at the end of Matthew.

15. *Lovest thou me more than these?* There is a slight ambiguity here in the original, as there is in our translation. The word *these* may be in the neuter gender, and refer to these things; his boat, and fishing utensils, and employments; or it may be in the masculine, and refer to the apostles. In the former sense it would mean, lovest thou me more than thou lovest these objects? Art thou now willing from love to me to forsake all these, and go and preach my gospel to the nations of the earth? In the other sense, which is probably the true sense, it would mean, lovest thou me more than these other apostles love me? In this question Jesus refers to the profession of superior attachment to him which Peter had made before his death, Matt. xvi. 33. Compare ch. xiii. 37. Jesus here slightly reproves him for that confident assertion, reminds him of his sad and painful denial, and now puts this direct and pointed question to him to know what was the present state of his feelings. After all that Peter had had to humble him, the Saviour inquired of him what had been the effect of all on his mind, and whether it had tended to prepare him for the arduous toils in which he was about to engage. This question we should all put to ourselves. It is a

Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed <sup>1</sup> my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xl. 11. Jer. ill. 15. Ezek. xxxiv. 2-10. Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. v. 2, 4.

matter of much importance that we should ourselves know what is the effect of the dealings of divine providence on our hearts, and what is our present state of feeling towards the Lord Jesus Christ.

¶ *Thou knowest that I love thee.* Peter now made no pretensions to love superior to his brethren. His sad denial had convinced him of the folly of that claim. But still he could appeal to the Searcher of the heart, and say that he knew that he loved him. Here is the expression of an humbled soul, a soul made sensible of its weakness and need of strength, yet with evidence of true attachment to the Saviour. It is not the most confident pretensions that constitute the highest proof of love to Christ, and the happiest and best state of feeling is when we can with humility, yet with confidence, look to the Lord Jesus and say, "Thou knowest that I love thee." ¶ *Feed my lambs.*

The word here rendered *feed* means the care afforded by furnishing nutriment for the flock. In the next verse there is a change in the Greek, and the word rendered *feed* denotes rather the care, guidance, and protection which a shepherd extends to his flock. By the use of both these words, it is supposed that our Saviour intended that a shepherd was both to offer the proper food for his flock and to govern it, or, as we express it, to exercise the office of a pastor. The expression is taken from the office of a shepherd, with which the office of the minister is frequently compared. It means, as a good shepherd provides for the wants of his flock, so the pastor in the church is to furnish food for the soul, or so to exhibit truth as that the faith may be strengthened, and the hope confirmed. ¶ *My lambs.* The church is often compared to a flock. See ch. x. 1-16. Here the expression, *my lambs*, undoubtedly refers to the tender and the young in the Chris-

tian church, to those who were young in years and in Christian experience. And the Lord Jesus saw, what has been confirmed in the experience of the church, that the success of the gospel among men depended on the care which the ministry would extend to those in early life. It is in obedience to this command that Sunday schools have been established, and no means of fulfilling the command of the Saviour have been found so effectual as to extend patronage to those schools. It is not merely, therefore, the privilege, it is the solemn duty of ministers of the gospel to countenance and patronize Sunday schools.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved <sup>2</sup> because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xlii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 23. <sup>3</sup> Lam. iii. 33.

tian church, to those who were young in years and in Christian experience. And the Lord Jesus saw, what has been confirmed in the experience of the church, that the success of the gospel among men depended on the care which the ministry would extend to those in early life. It is in obedience to this command that Sunday schools have been established, and no means of fulfilling the command of the Saviour have been found so effectual as to extend patronage to those schools. It is not merely, therefore, the privilege, it is the solemn duty of ministers of the gospel to countenance and patronize Sunday schools.

16. *Feed my sheep.* The word here rendered *feed*, as has been remarked, is different from the word in the previous verse. It has the sense of governing, and of protecting; the kind of faithful vigilance which a shepherd uses to guide his flock, and to make provision against their wants and dangers. It may be implied here that the care needed for the young in the church is to instruct them, and for those in advanced years both to instruct and govern them. ¶ *My sheep.* This term commonly denotes the church in general, without respect to age. Chap. x.

17. *The third time.* It is probable that Jesus proposed this question three times because Peter had thrice denied him. Thus he tenderly admonished him of his fault, reminded him of his sin, and solemnly charged him to be faithful, and vigilant in the discharge of the duties of the pastoral office. The reason why the Saviour addressed Peter in this manner was doubtless because he had just denied him, and given a most melancholy instance of the instability and weakness of his faith, and of his liability to fall. As he had thus been prominent in forsaking him, he took this occasion to give to him a special charge, and to secure his future

unto him, Lord, thou <sup>1</sup> knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, <sup>2</sup> When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xvi. 30.    <sup>2</sup> Ch. xlii. 36.    Acts xii. 3, 4.

obedience. Hence he so administered the charge as to remind him of his fault; and he made him so prominent as to show the solicitude of the Saviour that henceforward he might not be left to dishonour his high calling. This same charge, in substance, he had on other occasions given to the apostles, Matt. xviii. 18, and there is not the slightest evidence here that Christ intended, as the Papists pretend, to give Peter any peculiar primacy, or eminence in the church. The charge to Peter arose manifestly from his prominent and melancholy act in denying him—and was the kind and tender means used by a faithful Saviour to keep him from similar acts in the future dangers and trials of life. It is worthy of remark that the admonition was effectual. Henceforward, Peter was one of the most firm, and unwavering of all the apostles, and thus fully justified the appellation of a rock, which the Saviour by anticipation had given him. See Note, Ch. i. 42.

18. *When thou wast young.* When in early life, thou didst gird thyself, &c. The Jews in walking, or running, girded their outer garments around them, that they might not be impeded. ¶ *Thou girdedst.* The expression here denotes freedom. He did as he pleased; he girded himself or not, he went or remained, as he chose. Perhaps the expression refers rather to that time than to the previous period of Peter's life: Thou being now young, or in the vigour of life, hast just girded thyself, and come freely to the shore. In either case, the Saviour intimates that at the end of his life he would not be thus free. ¶ *When thou shalt be old.* Ancient writers say that Peter was put to death about thirty-four years after this. His precise age at that time is not known. ¶ *Thou shalt stretch*

shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall <sup>3</sup> gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death <sup>4</sup> he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow <sup>5</sup> me.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xli. 37, 38.    Acts xxi. 11.    <sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. i. 14.    <sup>5</sup> Ch. xli. 28.    Num. xiv. 24.    1 Sam. xli. 20.    Matt. xix. 28.

*forth thy hands.* When Peter was put to death we are told that he requested that he might be crucified with his head downwards, saying, that he who had denied his Lord as he had done, was not worthy to die as he did. This expression of Christ may intimate the readiness of Peter thus to die. Though he was not at liberty as when he was young, though bound by others, yet he freely stretched out his hands on the cross, and was ready to give up his life. ¶ *Another shall gird thee.* Another shall bind thee. The limbs of persons crucified were often bound instead of being nailed, and even the body was sometimes girded to the cross. See Notes on Matt. xxvii. 33. ¶ *Carry thee, &c.* Shall bear thee, or shall compel thee to go to prison and to death. This is not said to intimate that Peter would be unwilling to suffer martyrdom, but it stands opposed to the freedom of his early life. Though willing when compelled to do it, yet he would not seek it; and though he would not needlessly expose himself to it, yet he would not shrink from it when it was the will of God.

19. *By what death, &c.* In these words two things are implied. 1. That Peter should die a violent death; and 2. That his death should be such as to honour God. The ancients say that Peter was crucified at Rome, about thirty-four years after this, with his head downwards. Clemens says that he was led to the crucifixion with his wife, and sustained her in her sufferings by exhorting her to remember the example of her Lord. He also adds, that he died, not as the philosophers did, but with a firm hope of heaven, and patiently endured the pangs of the cross. Strom. vii. This declaration of the Saviour was doubtless continually before the



20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do*?

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I <sup>1</sup> come,

<sup>1</sup> Matt xxv. 31. Rev. i. 7.; xxii. 20.

mind of Peter, and to the hour of his death, he maintained the utmost constancy and fidelity in his cause, thus justifying the appellation which the Lord Jesus gave him—a rock.

20. *Who also leaned, &c.* See chap. xiii. 24, 25.

21. *What shall this man do?* This question probably means, What death shall he die? But it is impossible to know why Peter asked this question. John was a favourite disciple; and perhaps Peter suspected that he would have a happier lot, and not be put to death in this manner. Peter was grieved at the question of Jesus; he was probably deeply affected with the account of his own approaching sufferings, and with perhaps a mixture of grief, and envy, he asked what would be John's lot. But it is possible that it was from kindness to John; a deep solicitude about him, and a wish that he might not die in the same manner as one who had denied his Lord. Whatever the motive was, it was a curiosity which the Lord Jesus did not choose to gratify.

22. *That he tarry.* That he live. The same word is used to express life in Phil. i. 24, 25. 1 Cor. xv. 6. ¶ *Till I come.* Some have supposed this to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem; others to the day of judgment; others to signify that he should not die a violent death. But the plain meaning is "if I will that he should not die at all, it is nothing to thee." In this way the apostles evidently understood it, and hence the report that John should not die. It is remarkable that John was the last of the apostles; that he lived to nearly the close of the first century, and then died a peaceful death

what is *that* to thee? follow <sup>2</sup> thou me.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is *that* to thee?

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 12.

at Ephesus, being the only one, as is supposed, of the apostles who did not suffer martyrdom. The testimony of antiquity is clear on this point; and though there have been many idle conjectures about this passage, and about the fate of John, yet no fact of history is better attested than that John died, and was buried at Ephesus. ¶ *What is that to thee?* From this passage we learn, 1. That our main business is to follow and imitate the Lord Jesus Christ. 2. That there are many subjects of religion on which a vain and impertinent curiosity is exercised. All such curiosity Jesus here reproves. 3. That Jesus will take care of all his beloved disciples, and that we should not be unduly solicitous about them. 4. That we should go forward to whatever he calls us, to persecution or death, not envying the lot of any other man, and anxious only to do the will of God.

23. *Then went this saying, &c.* This mistake arose very naturally, 1. From the words of Jesus which might be easily misunderstood to mean that John should not die. And, 2. It was probably confirmed when it was seen that he survived all the other apostles, had escaped all the dangers of persecution, and was leading a peaceful life at Ephesus. This mistake John deemed it proper to correct before he died, and has thus left on record what Jesus said, and what he meant.

24. *This is the disciple, &c.* This proves that the beloved disciple was John. ¶ *We know.* That is, it is known; it is universally admitted. It was so decidedly his character that he always declared the truth, that it had become known, and was unquestioned, so that he himself might appeal to the universal testimony in his

these things: and <sup>1</sup> we know that his testimony is true.

25 And <sup>2</sup> there are also many other things which Jesus did, the

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 35. <sup>3</sup> John. 12. <sup>2</sup> Ch. xx. 30.

behalf. In this case, therefore, we have the testimony of a man whose character for nearly a century was that of a man of truth; so much so, that it had become in a manner proverbial, and put beyond a question. It is impossible to believe that such a man would sit down deliberately to impose on mankind, or to write a book which was false. And if he could not, then this book is true, and that is the same as saying that Christianity is a religion from heaven.

25. *Many other things.* Many miracles. Ch. xx. 30. Many discourses delivered, &c. ¶ *I suppose, &c.* This is evidently the figure of speech called a hyperbole. It is a mode of speech where the words express more or less than is literally true. It is common among all writers; and as the sacred writers in recording a revelation to men used human language, it was proper that they should express themselves as men ordinarily do if they wish to be understood. This figure of speech is commonly the effect of surprise, or of having the mind full of some object, and not having words to express the ideas. At the same time the words convey no falsehood. The statement is to be taken as it would be understood among the persons to whom it is addressed; and as no one supposes that the author means to be understood literally, so there is no deception in the case, and consequently no impeachment of his veracity or inspiration. Thus when Longinus said of a man that "he was owner of a piece of ground not larger than a Lacedæmonian letter," no one understood him literally. He means evidently a very small piece of land, and no one would be deceived. So Virgil says of a man, "he was so tall as to reach the stars," and means only that he was very tall. So when John says that the world would not contain the books that should be written if all the deeds and sayings of Jesus were recorded, he clearly intends nothing more than that a great many

which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain <sup>3</sup> the books that should be written. Amen.

<sup>3</sup> Am. vii. 10.

books would be required; or that it would be extremely difficult to record all that Jesus did and said, intimating that his life was active, that his discourses were numerous, and that he had not pretended to give them all, but only such as should go to establish the main point for which he wrote, that Jesus was the Messiah. Ch. xx. 30, 31. The figure which John uses here is not uncommon in the scriptures. Gen. xi. 4; xv. 5. Num. xiii. 33. Dan. iv. 20.

This gospel contains in itself the clearest proof of inspiration. It is the work of a fisherman of Galilee, without any proof that he had any unusual advantages. It is a connected, clear, and satisfactory argument to establish the great truth that Jesus was the Messiah. It was written many years after the ascension of Jesus. It contains the record of the Saviour's profoundest discourses, of his most convincing arguments with the Jews, and of his declarations respecting himself and God. It contains the purest and most elevated views of God to be found any where, as far exceeding all the speculations of philosophers, as the sun does the blaze of a taper. It is in the highest degree absurd to suppose that an unlettered fisherman could have originated this book. Any one may be convinced of this by comparing it with what would be the production of a man in that rank of life now. But if John has preserved the record of what had occurred so many years before, then it shows that he was under the divine guidance, and is himself a proof, a full and standing proof of the fulfilment of the promise which he has recorded, that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all truth. Ch. xiv. 26; xvi. 13. Of this book we may apply, in conclusion, the words spoken by John respecting his vision of the future events of the church. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this" book, "and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand." Rev. i. 3.

# A TABULAR HARMONY

OF THE

## PRINCIPAL EVENTS MENTIONED IN THE GOSPELS,

*According to the Chronology in John's Gospel, which Dr. Edward Robinson, of New York, regards as assigning four passovers, or about three years and a half, to our Lord's ministry.*

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# A TABULAR HARMONY

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OUR LORD'S SECOND PASSOVER, AND THE SUBSEQUENT TRANSACTIONS UNTIL THE THIRD.				
TIME: <i>One year.</i>				
The pool of Bethesda; the healing of the infirm man; and our Lord's subsequent discourse.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				5. 1-47
The disciples pluck ears of grain on the sabbath.— <i>On the way to Galilee?</i>	12. 1-8	2. 23-28	6. 1-5	
The healing of the withered hand on the sabbath.— <i>Galilee: Capernaum?</i>	12. 9-14	3. 1-6	6. 6-11	
Jesus arrives at the sea of Tiberias, and is followed by multitudes.	12. 15-21	3. 7-12		
Jesus withdraws to the mountain, and chooses the twelve; the multitudes follow him.— <i>Near Capernaum.</i>	10. 2-4 5. 1; 7. 29 8. 5-13	3. 13-19	6. 12-19 6. 20-49 7. 1-10 7. 11-17	
The sermon on the mount.— <i>Near Capernaum.</i>				
The healing of the centurion's servant.— <i>Capernaum.</i>				
The raising of the widow's son.— <i>Nain.</i>				
John the Baptist in prison sends disciples to Jesus.— <i>Galilee: Capernaum?</i>	11. 2-19		7. 18-35	
Reflections of Jesus on appealing to his mighty works.— <i>Capernaum?</i>	11. 20-30			
While sitting at meat with a Pharisee, Jesus is anointed by a woman who had been a sinner.— <i>Capernaum?</i>			7. 36-50	
Jesus, with the twelve, makes a second circuit in Galilee.			8. 1-3	
The healing of a demoniac. The scribes and Pharisees blaspheme.— <i>Galilee.</i>	12. 22-37	3. 19-30	11. 14, 15, 17-23	
The scribes and Pharisees seek a sign. Our Lord's reflections.— <i>Galilee.</i>	12. 38-45		11. 16, 24-36	
The true disciples of Christ his nearest relatives.— <i>Galilee.</i>	12. 46-50	3. 31-35	8. 19-21	
At a Pharisee's table, Jesus denounces woes against the Pharisees and others.— <i>Galilee.</i>			11. 37-54	
Jesus discourses to his disciples and the multitude.— <i>Galilee.</i>			12. 1-59	
The slaughter of certain Galileans. Parable of the barren fig-tree.— <i>Galilee.</i>			13. 1-9	
Parable of the sower.— <i>Sea of Galilee: near Capernaum?</i>	13. 1-23	4. 1-25	8. 4-18	
Parable of the tares. Other parables.— <i>Near Capernaum?</i>	13. 24-53	4. 26-34		
Jesus directs to cross the lake. Incidents. The tempest stilled.— <i>Sea of Galilee.</i>	8. 18-27	4. 35-41	8. 22-25	

# A TABULAR HARMONY.

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The two demoniacs of Gadara.— <i>S. E. coast of the Sea of Galilee.</i>	8.28-34 9. 1 }	5. 1-21	8. 26-40	
Levi's feast. Discourse concerning fasting.— <i>Capernaum.</i>	9. 10-17	2. 15-22	5. 29-39	
The raising of Jairus's daughter. The woman with an issue of blood.— <i>Capernaum.</i>	9. 18-26	5. 22-43	8. 41-56	
Two blind men healed, and a dumb spirit cast out.— <i>Capernaum?</i>	9. 27-34 13. 54-58 9. 35-38 10. 1, 5-42 11. 1	6. 1-6 } 6. 6-13	9. 1-6	
Jesus again at Nazareth, and again rejected.	{ 14. 1, 2, 6-12	6. 14-16, 21-29	9. 7-9	
A third circuit in Galilee. The twelve instructed and sent forth.— <i>Galilee.</i>	14. 13-21	6. 30-44	9. 10-17	6. 1-14
Herod holds Jesus to be John the Baptist, whom he had just before beheaded.— <i>Galilee? Perca.</i>	14. 22-36	6. 45-56		6. 15-21
The twelve return, and Jesus retires with them across the lake. Five thousand are fed.— <i>Capernaum. N. E. Coast of the Sea of Galilee.</i>				6. 22-71 7. 1
Jesus walks upon the water.— <i>Night on the Sea of Galilee. Gennesareth.</i>				
Our Lord's discourse to the multitude in the synagogue at Capernaum. Many disciples turn back. Peter's profession of faith.— <i>Capernaum.</i>				
SECTION V.				
FROM THE THIRD PASSOVER DURING OUR LORD'S MINISTRY UNTIL HIS FINAL DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE AT THE FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES.				
TIME: <i>Six months.</i>				
Our Lord justifies his disciples for eating with unwashed hands. Pharisaic traditions.— <i>Capernaum.</i>	15. 1-20	7. 1-23		
The daughter of a Syrophenician woman is healed.— <i>Region of Tyre and Sidon.</i>	15. 21-28	7. 24-30		
A deaf and dumb man healed; also many others. Four thousand are fed.— <i>The Decapolis.</i>	15. 29-38	{ 7.31-37 8. 1-9		
The Pharisees and Sadducees again require a sign.— <i>Near Magdala.</i>	15. 39 } 16. 1-4 }	8. 10-12		
The disciples cautioned against the leaven of the Pharisees, &c.— <i>N. E. coast of the Sea of Galilee.</i>	16. 4-12	8. 13-21 8. 22-26		
A blind man healed.— <i>Bethsaida (Julias).</i>				
Peter and the rest again profess their faith in Christ.— <i>Region of Casarea Philippi.</i>	16. 13-20	8. 27-30	9. 18-21	
Our Lord foretels his own death and resurrection, and the trials of his followers.— <i>Region of Casarea Philippi.</i>	16. 21-28	{ 8.31-38 9. 1	9. 22-27	
The transfiguration. Our Lord's subsequent discourse with the three disciples.— <i>Region of Casarea Philippi.</i>	17. 1-13	9. 2-13	9. 28-36	
The healing of a demoniac, whom the disciples could not heal.— <i>Region of Casarea Philippi.</i>	17. 14-21	9. 14-29	9. 37-43	
Jesus again foretels his own death and resurrection.— <i>Galilee.</i>	17. 22, 23	9. 30-32	9. 43-45	
The tribute-money miraculously provided.— <i>Capernaum.</i>	17. 24, 27	9. 33		
The disciples contend who should be the greatest. Jesus exhorts to humility, forbearance, and brotherly love.— <i>Capernaum.</i>	18. 1-35	9. 33-50	9. 46-50	
Jesus goes up to the festival of tabernacles. His final departure from Galilee. Incidents in Samaria. The seventy instructed and sent out.— <i>Samaria.</i>			9. 51-62 10. 1-16 17. 11-19	7. 2-10
Ten lepers cleansed.— <i>Samaria?</i>				
SECTION VI.				
THE FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES, AND THE SUBSEQUENT TRANSACTIONS UNTIL OUR LORD'S ARRIVAL AT BETHANY SIX DAYS BEFORE THE FOURTH PASSOVER.				
TIME: <i>Six months less one week.</i>				
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# A TABULAR HARMONY.

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Further public teaching of our Lord. He reproves the unbelieving Jews, and escapes from their hands.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				8. 12-36
A lawyer instructed. Love to our neighbour defined. Parable of the good Samaritan.— <i>Near Jerusalem.</i>			10. 25-37 10. 38-42	
Jesus in the house of Martha and Mary.— <i>Bethany.</i>			11. 1-13	
The disciples again taught how to pray.— <i>Near Jerusalem.</i>			10. 17-24	
The seventy return.— <i>Jerusalem?</i>				8. 1-41 10. 1-41
A man born blind is healed on the sabbath. Our Lord's subsequent discourses.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				10. 22-28 11. 1-46
Jesus in Jerusalem at the festival of dedication. He retires beyond Jordan.— <i>Jerusalem. Bethabara beyond Jordan.</i>				11. 47-54
The raising of Lazarus.— <i>Bethany.</i>				
The counsel of Caiaphas against Jesus. He retires from Jerusalem.— <i>Jerusalem. Ephraim.</i>				
Jesus beyond Jordan is followed by multitudes. The healing of the infirm woman on the sabbath.— <i>Valley of Jordan. Perea.</i>	12. 1, 2	10. 1	13. 10-41	
Our Lord goes teaching and journeying towards Jerusalem. He is warned against Herod.— <i>Perea.</i>			13. 22-35	
Our Lord dines with a chief Pharisee on the sabbath. Incidents.— <i>Perea.</i>			14. 1-24 14. 25-35	
What is required of true disciples.— <i>Perea.</i>			15. 1-32 16. 1-13	
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Parable of the unjust steward.— <i>Perea.</i>			18. 1-14	
The Pharisees reproved. Parable of the rich man and Lazarus.— <i>Perea.</i>			18. 15-17	
Jesus inculcates forbearance, faith, humility.— <i>Perea.</i>	19. 3-12	10. 2-12	18. 18-30	
Christ's coming will be sudden.— <i>Perea.</i>	19. 13-15	10. 13-16	18. 31-34	
Parables: the importunate widow. The Pharisee and publican.— <i>Perea.</i>	19. 16-30	10. 17-31	18. 35-43 19. 1	
Precepts respecting divorce.— <i>Perea.</i>	20. 1-16	10. 32-34	19. 2-28	11. 53-57 12. 1, 9-11
Jesus receives and blesses little children.— <i>Perea.</i>	20. 17-19	10. 35-45		
The rich young man. Parable of the labourers in the vineyard.— <i>Perea.</i>	20. 20-28	10. 46-52		
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The visit to Zaccheus. Parable of the ten pounds.— <i>Jericho.</i>				
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The barren fig-tree. The cleansing of the Temple.— <i>Bethany. Jerusalem.</i>	21. 12, 13, 18, 19	11. 12-19	19. 45-48 21. 37, 38	
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Parable of the wicked husbandmen.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	21. 33-46	12. 1-12	20. 9-19	
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Insidious question of the Sadducees: the resurrection.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	22. 23-33	12. 18-27	20. 27-30	

# A TABULAR HARMONY.

CONTENTS.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
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How is Christ the Son of David?— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	22. 41-46	12. 35-37	20. 41-44	
Warnings against the evil example of the scribes and Pharisees.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	23. 1-12	12. 38, 39	20. 45, 46	
Woe against the scribes and Pharisees. Lamentation over <i>Jerusalem.</i> — <i>Jerusalem.</i>	23. 13-39	12. 40 12. 41-44	20. 47 21. 1-4	12. 20-36 12. 37-50
The widow's mite.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				
Certain Greeks desire to see Jesus.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				
Reflections upon the unbelief of the Jews.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				
Jesus, on taking leave of the temple, foretells its destruction and the persecution of his disciples.— <i>Jerusalem.</i> <i>Mount of Olives.</i>	24. 1-14	13. 1-13	21. 5-19	
The signs of Christ's coming to destroy <i>Jerusalem</i> , and put an end to the Jewish state and dispensation.— <i>Mount of Olives.</i>	24. 15-42	13. 14-37	21. 20-36	
Transition to Christ's final coming at the day of judgment. Exhortation to watchfulness. Parables; the ten virgins; the five talents.— <i>Mount of Olives.</i>	{ 24. 43-51 25. 1-30			
Scenes of the judgment day.— <i>Mount of Olives.</i>	25. 31-46			
The rulers conspire. The supper at Bethany. Treachery of Judas.— <i>Jerusalem.</i> <i>Bethany.</i>	26. 1-16	14. 1-11	22. 1-6	12. 2-8
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The passover meal. Contention among the twelve.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	26. 20	14. 17	{ 22. 14-18 24-30	13. 1-20
Jesus washes the feet of his disciples.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				
Jesus points out the traitor. Judas withdrawn.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	26. 21-25	14. 18-21	22. 21-23	13. 21-35
Jesus foretells the fall of Peter, and the dispersion of the twelve.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	26. 31-35	14. 27-31	22. 31-38	13. 36-38
The Lord's supper.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	26. 26-29	14. 22-25	22. 19, 20	
Jesus comforts his disciples. The Holy Spirit promised.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				14. 1-31
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Persecution foretold. Further promise of the Holy Spirit. Prayer in the name of Christ.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				16. 1-33
Christ's last prayer with his disciples.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				17. 1-26
The agony in Gethsemane.— <i>Mount of Olives.</i>	{ 26. 30, 36-46	14. 26, 32-42	22. 39, 46	18. 1
Jesus betrayed, and made prisoner.— <i>Gethsemane.</i>	26. 47-56	14. 43-62	22. 47-53	18. 2-12
Jesus before Calaphas. Peter thrice denies him.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	{ 26. 57, 58, 69-75	{ 14. 53, 54, 66-72	22. 54-62	{ 18. 13-18 25-27
Jesus before Calaphas and the Sanhedrim. He declares himself to be the Christ; is condemned and mocked.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	26. 59-68	14. 55-65	22. 63-71	18. 19-24
The Sanhedrim lead Jesus away to Pilate.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	{ 27. 1, 2, 11-14	15. 1-5	23. 1-5 23. 6-12	18. 28-38
Jesus before Herod.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				
Pilate seeks to release Jesus. The Jews demand Barabbas.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 15-26	15. 6-15	23. 13-25	18. 39, 40
Pilate delivers up Jesus to death. He is scourged and mocked.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 26-30	15. 15-19		19. 1-3
Pilate, after again seeking to release Jesus, delivers him to be crucified.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				19. 4-16
Judas repents and hangs himself.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 3-10			
Jesus is led away to be crucified.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 31-34	15. 20-23	23. 26-33	19. 16, 17
The crucifixion.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 35-38	15. 24-28	23. 33, 34, 38	19. 18-24
The Jews mock at Jesus on the cross. He commends his mother to John.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 39-44	15. 29-32	23. 35-37, { 39-43	19. 25-27

# A TABULAR HARMONY.

CONTENTS.	MATT.	MARK	LUKE.	JOHN.
Darkness prevails. Christ expires on the cross.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 45-50	15. 33-37	23. 44-46	19. 28-30
The veil of the temple rent, and graves opened. Judgment of the centurion. The women at the cross.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 51-56	15. 38-41	23. 45, 47-49	
The taking down from the cross. The burial.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	27. 57-61	15. 42-47	23. 50-56	19. 31-42
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Visit of the women to the sepulchre. Mary Magdalene returns.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	28. 1	16. 2-4	24. 1-3	20. 1, 2
Vision of angels in the sepulchre.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	28. 5-7	16. 5-7	24. 4-8	
The women return to the city. Jesus meets them.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	28. 8-10	16. 8	24. 9-11	
Peter and John run to the sepulchre.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>			24. 12	20. 3-10
Our Lord is seen by Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>	28. 11-15	16. 9-11		20. 11-18
Report of the watch.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				
Our Lord is seen by Peter. Then by two disciples on the way to Emmaus. <i>Jerusalem. Emmaus.</i>		16. 12, 13	24. 13-35	
Jesus appears in the midst of the apostles, Thomas being absent.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>		16. 14-18	24. 36-49	20. 19-33
Jesus appears in the midst of the apostles, Thomas being present.— <i>Jerusalem.</i>				20. 24-29
The apostles go away into Galilee. Jesus shows himself to nine of them at the sea of Tiberias.— <i>Galilee.</i>	28. 16			21. 1-24
Jesus meets his apostles and about five hundred brethren on a mountain in Galilee.	28. 16-20			
The ascension.— <i>Bethany.</i>		16. 19, 20	24. 50-53	
Conclusion of John's Gospel.				20. 30-31 21. 25



## THE CHIEF

# DISCOURSES, PARABLES, AND MIRACLES OF OUR LORD,

RECORDED BY THE EVANGELISTS.

*Arranged according to Dr. Robinson's Harmony, See pp. 835—840.*

### I. DISCOURSES.\*

	To be found in
With Nicodemus . . . .	John iii.
With the Samaritan woman . . . . .	John iv.
At Nazareth, in the synagogue . . . . .	Luke iv.
At Jerusalem, on occasion of a miracle . . . .	John v.
Sermon on the mount . .	Matt. v.-vii.
At the Pharisee's table .	Luke xi.
Public, to the disciples, and the multitude . . . .	Luke xii.
On fasting, at Levi's feast .	Matt ix.†
To the twelve, on their being sent out . . . .	Matt. x.
To the people in the synagogue at Capernaum .	John vi.
In defence of the disciples	Matt. xv.
To the disciples, against the doctrine of the Pharisees, &c. . . . .	Matt. xvi.
To three of the disciples, after the transfiguration . . . . .	Matt. xvii.
To the disciples, commending humility, &c. . . .	Matt. xviii.
To the seventy, on sending them out . . . . .	Luke x.
At the feast of tabernacles	John vii.
To some Pharisees, after	

	To be found in
their accusation of the woman . . . . .	John viii.
To Jews, about freedom and bondage, &c. . . .	John viii.
On the healing of the blind man . . . . .	John ix.
As Christ was going towards Jerusalem the last time . . . . .	Luke xiii.
At a chief Pharisee's house	Luke xiv.
On forbearance, faith, humility &c. . . . .	Luke xvii.
On the suddenness of Christ's coming . . . .	Luke xvii.
On divorce, marriage, &c.	Matt. xix.
On the request for Zebedee's sons . . . . .	Matt. xx.
On the unbelief of the Jews	John xii.
On the destruction of Jerusalem . . . . .	Matt. xxiv.
On washing the feet of the disciples . . . . .	John xiii.
On the treason of Judas .	Matt. xxvi.
Consolatory, at the pass-over table . . . . .	John xiv.
On the vine and the branches . . . . .	John xv.
To the disciples, on the Holy Spirit and prayer . . .	John xvi.

\* The editor takes the opportunity which this catalogue of Christ's discourses gives him, of earnestly commending to the readers of this Commentary an admirable work recently published under the title, "Discourses and Sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ, Illustrated in a series of Expositions," in 3 vols. 8vo. by Dr. John Brown, Edinburgh. Its learning, its theology, and its eloquence, all entitle it to a very high place among works of this class.

† This discourse, and some others, together with matters in the two following tables, are recorded by more than one evangelist. We deem a single reference sufficient. Readers will compare the several narratives.

## DISCOURSES, PARABLES, AND MIRACLES.

### II. PARABLES.

	To be found in		To be found in
Creditor and debtors . . .	Luke vii.	Lost money . . . . .	Luke xv.
Servants waiting for their		Prodigal son . . . . .	Luke xv.
Lord . . . . .	Luke xi.	Unjust steward . . . . .	Luke xvi.
Rich fool . . . . .	Luke xii.	Rich man and Lazarus . . .	Luke xvi.
Sower . . . . .	Matt. xiii.	Importunate widow . . . .	Luke xviii.
Tares . . . . .	Matt. xiii.	Pharisee and publican . . .	Luke xviii.
Mustard seed . . . . .	Matt. xiii.	Labourers in the vineyard . .	Matt. xx.
Leaven in the meal . . . .	Matt. xiii.	The ten pounds . . . . .	Luke xix.
Treasure hidden . . . . .	Matt. xiii.	The two sons . . . . .	Matt. xxi.
Pearl of great price . . . .	Matt. xiii.	Wicked husbandmen . . . .	Matt. xxi.
Net . . . . .	Matt. xiii.	Marriage of king's son . . .	Matt. xxii.
Householder . . . . .	Matt. xiii.	The budding fig-tree . . . .	Matt. xxiv.
Unmerciful servant . . . .	Matt. xviii.	The ten virgins . . . . .	Matt. xxv.
Good Samaritan . . . . .	Luke x.	The five talents . . . . .	Matt. xxv.
Shepherd and the sheep . .	John x.	Sheep and goats . . . . .	Matt. xxv.
Lost sheep . . . . .	Luke xv.	The Vine . . . . .	John xv.

### III. MIRACLES.

	To be found in		To be found in
Water turned into wine . . .	John ii.	Five thousand fed . . . .	Matt. xiv.
Nobleman's son . . . . .	John iv.	Walking on the water . . .	Matt. xiv.
Draught of fishes . . . .	Matt. iv.	The Syrophenician wo-	
A demoniac at Capernaum .	Mark i.	man's daughter . . . . .	Matt. xv.
Peter's wife's mother and		Deaf and dumb man, and	
others . . . . .	Matt. viii.	many others . . . . .	Matt. xv.
The leper in Galilee . . . .	Matt. viii.	Four thousand fed . . . .	Matt. xv.
The paralytic in Capernaum	Matt. ix.	A blind man at Bethsaida .	Mark viii.
The diseased man at Beth-		The youthful demoniac . . .	Matt. xvii.
saida . . . . .	John v.	The tribute money . . . . .	Matt. xvii.
The man with a withered		Ten lepers . . . . .	Luke xvii.
hand . . . . .	Matt. xii.	The blind man at Jeru-	
The centurion's servant . .	Matt. viii.	salem . . . . .	John ix.
The widow's son at Nain . .	Luke vii.	The raising of Lazarus at	
A demoniac in Galilee . . .	Matt. xii.	Bethany . . . . .	John xi.
The tempest on the lake . .	Matt. viii.	The infirm woman . . . . .	Matt. ix.
The two demoniacs at Gada-		The man with the dropsy .	Luke xiv.
ra . . . . .	Matt. viii.	Two blind men near Je-	
Daughter of Jairus . . . . .	Matt. ix.	richo . . . . .	Matt. ix.
Woman with an issue . . .	Matt. ix.	The fig-tree . . . . .	Matt. xxi.
Two blind men . . . . .	Matt. ix.	Malchus healed . . . . .	Luke xxi.
A dumb demoniac . . . . .	Matt. ix.	Draught of fishes . . . .	John xxi.

# TABLES.

## A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

*Of the principal events occurring in Judea, and the corresponding events in the Roman Empire, from the conquest of Judea by Pompey, to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.*

### BEFORE CHRIST.

77—68. **ALEXANDRA**, Queen of the Jews. She leaves two sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus. Both claim the crown; Aristobulus seizing upon it by force, and Hyrcanus being placed on the throne by the Pharisees. In a battle between the two brothers, Hyrcanus is overcome, and Aristobulus secures the crown.

70. Pompey and Crassus, consuls in Rome.

66. Pompey conquers Mithridates, and reduces Pontus.

65. In Syria, the dynasty of the Seleucidae ends with Antiochus XII., who is overcome by Pompey. Syria becomes a Roman province.

67—63. **ARISTOBULUS II.**, King of the Jews. He had been High Priest under the reign of his mother, nine years. Was then king and high priest. Was afterwards priest nineteen years. Then Ethnarch four years. Then Herod's captive and sport, eight years. Hyrcanus, at the instigation of Antipater, the father of Herod the Great, seeks the aid of Aretas, the king of Arabia. Antipater, or Antipas, was an Idumean by birth, but had adopted the Jewish religion, and was governor of Idumea during the reign of Alexander Jannæus, and his widow, Alexandra. Antipater joins the party of Hyrcanus. He and Hyrcanus flee to Aretas, king of Arabia. Aretas agrees to place him on the throne, and conducts him to Judea with an army of 50,000 men, takes Jerusalem, and restores him to the throne. Aristobulus flees to the temple, and then appeals to Scæurus, the Roman general at Damascus, for aid. Scæurus writes to Aretas; threatens to declare him an enemy of the Roman people if he does not withdraw. He withdraws, and Aristobulus pursues him, and defeats him in a battle.

63. Pompey the Great, who had come to Damascus, commands the two brothers to appear before him. The two brothers appear before him, and urge their respective claims; Hyrcanus pleading his birth, Aristobulus, the necessity of the case. Aristobulus, foreseeing that the decision would be against him, withdraws and fortifies himself in Jerusalem. Aristobulus surrenders himself to Pompey, but his party shuts the gates against the Romans, and Pompey puts Aristobulus in chains, and begins a siege. The city is taken by the Romans, because the Jews would not fight on the sabbath, and is brought under the Roman power, according to Calmet, 59 B.C.; according to Hales, 63; and Jahn, 63. Pompey confirms Hyrcanus in the High Priesthood.

63—55. **HYRCANUS II.**, Prince and High Priest of the Jews. Judea a Roman Province.

60. **THE FIRST TRIUMVIRATE** :—Pompey, Crassus, and Julius Cæsar.

58. Clodius procures the banishment of Cicero.

55. Cæsar invades Britain.

54. Alexander, son of Aristobulus, escapes from those who were carrying him to

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

Rome, and returns to Judea and raises soldiers. Hyrcanus, not being able to defend himself, applies to Gabinius, the Roman general. Antipater, the father of Herod the Great, joins the Roman army. Alexander is defeated. Gabinius confirms Hyrcanus in the High Priesthood, but changes the form of the government to an Aristocracy. This continues until 44 B.C., when Cæsar comes to Judea, and restores Hyrcanus to his former power.

53. Aristobulus escapes from Rome, and comes to Judea with his younger son, Antigonus. They are taken prisoners, and sent to Rome.

54. Gabinius is removed from Judea, Crassus is made pro-consul of Syria, and comes to Syria. He comes to Jerusalem, and robs the temple of 8,000 talents of gold, which, estimated at the value of the Jewish talent, gold being £4 per oz., would amount to the enormous sum of forty-three millions, eight hundred thousand pounds sterling. Crassus also makes war with the Parthians, and is put to death. Cassius Longinus succeeds him in the command of the army. Brings the remainder of the army over the Euphrates, and takes about 30,000 Jewish captives.

53. Augustus, afterwards the Roman emperor, is born.

48. Calpurnius Bibulus made governor of Syria.

48. About this time Ptolemy Auletes, king of Egypt, died.

46—44. Hyrcanus II. high priest.

46. Civil war between Cæsar and Pompey.

45. Battle of Pharsalia in Thessaly, where Pompey is defeated. Pompey flees to Egypt, and is beheaded.

45. ANTIPATER, THE FATHER OF HEROD THE GREAT, is made governor of Judea. He is appointed to this office by Julius Cæsar. Cæsar confirms Hyrcanus in the High Priesthood, and gives him permission to build the walls of Jerusalem, which had been demolished by Pompey.

44. Hyrcanus sends to Rome a golden shield, and the Jews are, by a decree of the Senate, acknowledged as the allies of the Romans.

44. Antipater re-builds the walls of Jerusalem. He makes his eldest son, Phazael, governor of Jerusalem, and Herod, afterwards Herod the Great, governor of Galilee.

44. Cæsar subdues all Egypt, and gives it into the hands of Cleopatra. Is again made dictator.

Herod attacks and subdues the robbers in Galilee.

Herod is summoned before the Sanhedrim on the charge of the exercise of arbitrary power. He appears before them in a purple robe, and attended by his life-guard, and defies them. He departs from Jerusalem, and goes to Sextus Cæsar, at Damascus, and obtains the government of all Cæle-Syria.

43. The Roman calendar reformed by Julius Cæsar. This year was called the *year of confusion*, and consisted of 445 days.

41. Julius Cæsar restores to the Jews all that they had formerly possessed, and confirms them in the enjoyment of all their privileges.

Cæsar is put to death in the senate-house.

40. TRIUMVIRATE :—Octavianus Cæsar (afterwards Augustus), Antony, and Lepidus.

40. Jewish ambassadors appear at Rome to pray that their privileges may be confirmed. Their request is granted.

39. Malichus causes Antipater, the father of Herod, to be poisoned.

39. Herod causes Malichus to be killed, to revenge the death of his father.

39. Battle of Philippi, in which Brutus and Cassius were defeated.

39. Herod and Phazael, tetrarchs of Judea. They are accused by the Jews before Antony. More than a thousand Jews appear with these complaints. Antony regards it as a rebellion, and causes many of them to be slain, and confirms the brothers as tetrarchs of the Jews.

Antigonus, son of Aristobulus, prevails on the Parthians to place him on the throne of Judea. The Parthians seize Hyrcanus and Phazael, and deliver them up to Antigonus.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

Phasael beats out his own brains. Antigonus cuts off the ears of Hyrcanus, and sends him beyond the Euphrates.

37. Herod is forced to flee to Jerusalem, and thence to Rome, to implore the aid of Antony. He obtains the grant of the kingdom of Judea from the senate, and the governors of Syria are required to aid him in securing it. He reigns thirty-seven years. He is conducted to the Capitol at Rome by Antony and Octavianus, and there crowned king, with idolatrous sacrifices.

37. HEROD, KING OF JUDEA. He was the second son of Antipater, an Idumean by birth, who had been governor of Judea.

37. Ventidius, a Roman, has command of the forces in the east; appointed by Antony.

Herod returns to Judea, having been absent but three months. He raises an army. Hastens to relieve his family in the fortress of Massada, where they were besieged by Antigonus. Goes to Idumea and takes possession of a strong fortress by the name of Resa, and then returns and lays siege to Jerusalem. Unable to take the city, he is obliged to decamp. Marches to Galilee, and endeavours to clear the country of robbers.

36. Herod renews his attacks on the robbers. Is obliged to let down his soldiers in chests by ropes over the mouth of the caves, and to fight them there. Having subdued the robbers, he marches to Samaria against Antigonus, but is obliged to return to Galilee, to quell the robbers.

The brother of Herod, Joseph, is surrounded and slain by the army of Antigonus, near Jericho.

36. Antony leads an army against the Parthians. Commits the government of Syria to Sosius, and returns to Italy.

The Roman Triumvirate continues, and Antony has assigned to him the affairs of the east.

35. Herod marches against Jerusalem, and lays siege again to the city.

He is married to Mariamne, to whom he had been betrothed four years. She was the daughter of Alexander, the son of king Aristobulus, by Alexandra, the daughter of Hyrcanus II., and was thus grand-daughter to both these brothers. Herod hoped by this marriage to reconcile the Jews to him, as the Asmonean family, from which she was descended, was in high favour with the Jews. She was a woman of uncommon beauty. Herod is joined by the Roman general, Sosius.

34. Jerusalem is taken by Herod, and Antigonus surrenders himself. He is treated with the greatest indignity. Is sent to Antioch, and beheaded by the command of Antony, and thus the reign of the Asmoneans, which had lasted a hundred and twenty-six years, is ended, and Herod is confirmed in the kingdom.

REIGN OF HEROD THE GREAT.

34. Herod condemns to death all the members of the sanhedrim, except Sameas and Pollio.

32. He appoints to the office of high priest, Ananel of Babylon, a common priest, but a descendant of the ancient high priests.

He invites Hyrcanus II. to come to Jerusalem from Seleucia, where he had been kindly entertained by the Oriental Jews. Hyrcanus comes to Jerusalem, where he is treated by Herod with great respect.

32. Herod, at the earnest solicitations of Alexandra and Mariamne, deprives Ananel of the High Priesthood, and confers it on Aristobulus, the brother of Mariamne, then only seventeen years old. Herod is displeased with the interference of Alexandra in this business, and she and her son Aristobulus attempt to escape to Cleopatra in Egypt. Aristobulus is drowned by order of Herod, in a lake near Jericho, on account of the affection shown for him by the people.

32. Antony comes into Syria, but goes then into Egypt, where he spends a whole year with Cleopatra. Lepidus and Octavianus come to an open rupture, and Lepidus retires as a private man, and the Roman power is left in the hands of Antony and Octavianus, afterwards Augustus.

31. Herod is sent for by Antony, to justify himself against the charge of having

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

murdered Aristobulus. Gives his kingdom to the care of his uncle Joseph. Charges him in case he is condemned, to put Mariamne to death, that she might not be possessed by Antony. Joseph informs her of the charge of Herod, and is imprisoned on his return.

30. Ananel, high priest the second time.

War between Augustus and Antony. Herod sides with Antony.

Antony gives to Cleopatra the most fertile part of Judea, but Herod agrees to pay her a yearly tribute of two hundred talents.

Cleopatra visits Herod at Jerusalem, and attempts, in vain, to entangle him in her snares.

Antony makes war on Armenia. Appoints Cesarion son of Julius Caesar by Cleopatra, king of Egypt. Makes his eldest son, Alexander, king of Armenia and Parthia.

27. Herod makes war with the Arabians, at the command of Antony. Is defeated near Cana. A great earthquake in Judea.

27. The Battle of Actium between Antony and Octavianus, which decides the destiny of the Roman world. Antony is defeated.

26. Antony and Cleopatra kill themselves.

26. Hyrcanus, then 80 years of age, attempts to escape, and Herod gladly embraces this opportunity to put him to death. Goes to Rome to pay court to Augustus, and to conciliate his favour. Places Mariamne and her mother, Alexandra, in the castle of Alexandrium, with orders to the keepers to put them to death if he is slain. Confesses to Augustus all that he had done for Antony, and is confirmed in his kingdom.

25. Augustus visits Judea, and is magnificently entertained by Herod.

24. Mariamne becomes irreconcilably opposed to Herod. Herod becomes jealous. Orders the most faithful servant of Mariamne to be put to the torture. Accuses Mariamne of adultery before judges of his own selection. She is condemned, in accordance with the wishes of Herod, and immediately executed. Herod, filled with remorse, loses all self-command.

23. Herod puts to death the sons of Babas, at the instigation of her sister Salome, and thus cuts off the last remains of the Asmonean race. They were the descendants of Hyrcanus, and Herod now felt himself secure from any claimant to the throne.

21. Plague and famine in Judea. Herod lays the foundation of a palace on Mount Zion.

He marries Mariamne, the daughter of the priest Simon.

21. Augustus is made emperor. He was the nephew of Julius Caesar.

19. Herod builds Caesarea in Palestine, and fortifies Samaria. Sends to Rome his two sons, Alexander, and Aristobulus, whom he had by the murdered Mariamne. Agrippa the favourite of Augustus, is made governor of the east.

18. Augustus visits Antioch, and at the request of Herod, raises his brother Pheroras to the dignity of a tetrarch.

17. Agrippa comes into Asia. Herod visits him.

16. Herod, in order to conciliate the affection of the Jews, resolves on rebuilding the temple in a style of much greater magnificence than the former temple. Two years are spent in collecting materials. The old temple is taken down by degrees as fast as its parts could be replaced by the new building. The main body of the edifice completed in nine years and a half. But the whole not completed until long after the death of Herod. Notes on John ii. 20.

13. Herod goes to Rome. Takes his two sons with him on his return, and marries them; the one to a daughter of the king of Cappadocia, and the other to a daughter of his sister Salome.

12. Agrippa visits the east, and is magnificently entertained by Herod, at Jerusalem.

8. Herod goes to Rome, and accuses his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, of a design against his life. To this he is instigated principally by his brother, Pheroras, and his sister Salome, on account of their hatred of Mariamne.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

7. *Caesarea*, a city built in honour of *Augustus*, is dedicated with great pomp.

Herod is finally reconciled to his sons by the influence of *Archelaus*, king of *Capadocia*, whose daughter *Alexander* had married. He goes into *Arabia*, takes the fortress of *Repta*, and puts the garrison to the sword.

5. He breaks open the tomb of *David*, and takes out a large amount of treasures.

3. The suspicions of Herod are again excited against his two sons, *Alexander* and *Aristobulus*. They are arrested, tried, condemned, and sent to *Samaria*, where they are strangled, by order of their father.

1. *Pheroras*, the brother of Herod, and *Antipater*, the son of Herod, form a conspiracy against his life. The plan is to poison him. *Pheroras* is taken sick and dies. *Antipater* at the time is in *Rome*. The whole plot is discovered by the widow of *Pheroras*, and Herod divorces his wife, *Mariamne*, daughter of *Simon*, for being an accomplice, strikes the name of *Antipater* from his will, deposes *Simon* from the High Priesthood, and puts many persons to death. All this is kept secret from *Antipater* at *Rome*, and Herod sends for him to come home, with many expressions of his paternal love.

*Augustus* the Roman emperor. The temple of *Janus* shut, as a sign of universal peace.

The birth of Christ four years before the common Christian era. That era began to be used about A.D. 526, being first employed by *Dionysius*, and is supposed to have been placed about four years too late. Some make the difference two, others three, four, five, and even eight years. He was born at the commencement of the last year of the reign of Herod, or at the close of the year preceding. Herod had been king thirty-seven years; *Augustus* emperor about sixteen.

*Antipater* returns from *Rome*. Is accused and convicted of a design to murder Herod, and is put to death by his order. The flight into *Egypt*. Matt. ii. 13—16. The murder of the Innocents at *Bethlehem*. Matt. ii. 16.

Herod dies at *Jericho*, five days after his son *Antipater*, in the seventieth year of his age, of a most loathsome and painful disease. He called around him the principal men of the nation, and charged his sister *Salome* and her husband to confine them in the hippodrome, and to massacre them as soon as he had breathed his last, that the Jews might have some cause to mourn when he died.

By the will of Herod, *Archelaus* is appointed his successor in the kingdom; Herod *Antipas* made tetrarch of *Perea* and *Galilee*; and *Philip*, tetrarch of *Betanea*, *Gaulonitis*, *Trachonitis*, and *Panaea*. To his sister *Salome* he gives *Jamnia* and some other places. As soon as Herod was dead, his sister *Salome* dismissed all the Jewish nobles who had been confined in the hippodrome, and who had been ordered to be put to death.

### AFTER CHRIST.

2—11. *ARCHELAUS*, goes to *Rome* to obtain the confirmation of his title as king from *Augustus*. The decision of *Augustus* is delayed. *Archelaus* takes the High Priesthood from *Joazar*, and gives it to *Eleazar*.

Great tumult in *Judea*. The nation in arms against the Roman power. The temple is attacked, but the Romans are repulsed.

*Augustus* confirms *Archelaus* in the kingdom, but with the title of *ethnarch*, instead of king. *Archelaus* rebuilds *Jericho*. Is accused by the Jews and Samaritans of tyranny, before *Augustus*, and is banished to *Vienne*, in *Gaul*, in the tenth year of his reign.

A.D. 12—26. *JUDEA* a Roman Province. In 12 A.D., *Augustus* united *Judea* and *Samaria* to *Syria*, and appointed *Publius Sulpitius Quirinus Cyrenius*, Luke ii. 2, governor of the province. At the same time *Coponius* is made procurator of *Judea*.

14. The temple at *Jerusalem* is polluted by some Samaritans, who entered it by night, and strewed there the bones of dead men.

17. *Augustus* dies at *Rola*, in *Campania*, in the 76th year of his age, and the 57th year of his reign. He is succeeded by *Tiberius*, the son of his wife *Julia*.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

18. Valerius Gratus made procurator of Judea by Tiberius. He deposes Ananias, and makes Ismael High Priest. Afterwards he gives the office to Eleazar, son of Ananias, then to Simeon, and at last to Joseph, called in the New Testament *Caiaphas*.

Herod Antipas builds the city of Tiberias.

26—38. PONTIUS PILATE made Procurator of Judea by Tiberius.

He attempts to set up Roman colours and ensigns in Jerusalem, but is opposed by the Jews.

29. John the Baptist begins to preach.

30. Jesus is baptized by John.

Tiberius banishes all who professed the Jewish religion from Rome.

About this time hostilities existed between Herod Antipas, and Aretas, king of Arabia. Herod Antipas had married a daughter of Aretas. On his way to Rome, he saw and fell in love with Herodias, the wife of his brother, and agreed to marry her, and to put away the daughter of Aretas. She hearing this, fled to her father, and the consequence was a war, in which Herod was defeated, and his army dispersed.

30. John the Baptist declares this marriage unlawful, and is imprisoned by Herod.

31. John the Baptist in prison. Sends a deputation to Jesus to know if he was the Messiah.

32. Is slain by the order of Herod, at the instigation of Herodias.

33. Jesus is crucified on Friday, April 3. Supposed to have been at about three o'clock, P.M.

34. Stephen put to death. Paul converted on his way to Damascus.

35. Agrippa the younger being involved in debt, resolves to go to Rome. Attaches himself to the party of Caius, and incurs the displeasure of Tiberius. This year Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, &c., a son of Herod the Great died. He was mild and equitable in his government, and had ruled thirty-seven years. The countries over which he had presided were at his death united to the province of Syria.

37. Tiberius dies, a most profligate and abandoned man. He is succeeded by Caius Caligula.

37. Pilate is recalled by Caligula, and banished to Vienne, in Gaul, where he is said to have put an end to his own life.

38—45. AGRIPPA THE YOUNGER King of the Jews. He was the son of Aristobulus, and grandson of Mariamne. Shortly before the death of Herod the Great, his grandfather, he goes to Rome, squanders his property there, and is reduced to want. Goes to Idumea, and resolves to commit suicide. Persuaded to abandon his plan by his wife. Obtains the government from Tiberius. Is accused by his half-brother, Aristobulus, and goes again to Rome. Is favourably received by Tiberius. Is accused, however, of having made a treasonable remark respecting Tiberius, and imprisoned till the death of that emperor. Is released by Caligula from prison, and made king of Gaulonitis, Batanea, and Trachonitis.

42. Herod Antipas, at the instigation of Agrippa, is banished to Lyons, and his tetrarchy given to King Agrippa.

Caligula orders Petronius to place his statue in the temple at Jerusalem. It is delayed at the instance of Agrippa.

42. Caligula is assassinated at Rome, and succeeded by Claudius.

42. Agrippa is raised by Claudius to the rank of Consul. Samaria and Judea are given him, and thus he obtains the entire kingdom of Herod the Great.

42. Agrippa arrives at Jerusalem.

43. Deprives the high priest, Matthias, of the Priesthood, and bestows it on Elioenus.

Causes the apostle, James the Greater, to be put to death, Acts xii. 1, and imprisons Peter. Soon afterwards dies at Cæsarea, in great misery. Acts xii. 21—23.

A famine at Rome.

45. Cuspius Fadus is sent into Judea as governor or procurator. He continues in the office two years.

A great famine in Judea.



## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

Fadus demands that the vestments of the high priest should be placed under Roman custody. Longinus comes to Jerusalem to enforce this order.

Claudius places Herod, the brother of the deceased Agrippa, over the temple and the treasury.

A celebrated false Messiah appears. He persuades the people to follow him to the Jordan. Promises to stop the river by a word, and to lead them over on dry ground. Is pursued by the Roman cavalry, and beheaded.

A second famine in the reign of Claudius. This was in Palestine. Acts xi. 28.

46. Fadus is recalled. Tiberius, an apostate Jew, is made governor of Judea in his place.

47. Claudius takes away the authority of Herod, and gives it to Agrippa, the son of king Agrippa, who died at Cæsarea. This was the Agrippa before whom Paul afterwards appeared. Acts xxvi.

47. Tiberius is recalled, and Cumanus is made procurator of Judea. Violent disturbances in Judea.

53. Cumanus is recalled and expelled from Rome. Claudius appoints Felix procurator of Judea. Felix was a freedman of Claudius. Claudius gives to Agrippa the tetrarchy which had formerly belonged to Philip, Gaulonitis, Batanea, and Trachonitis.

Claudius expels the Jews from Rome, because, in expectation of the Messiah, they are constantly exciting disturbances.

55. Claudius dies, being poisoned by the empress Agrippina, the mother of Nero. Nero succeeds him. Nero soon puts many persons to death, and among others his own mother.

56. Nero gives to Agrippa the cities Tiberias, Tarichæa, Abila, and Julias, and the districts belonging to them.

Felix captures a number of robbers and crucifies them.

The *sicarii*, or robbers with short swords, appear and abound in Judea. Felix hires one of them to assassinate the High Priest, Jonathan. Many false prophets appear in Judea.

58. Paul goes into Judea to carry contributions. Is seized in the temple at Jerusalem, and sent to Cæsarea. Ishmael made high priest. Paul makes his defence before Felix (Acts xxiv.) at Cæsarea. Is imprisoned two years.

60. PORCIUS FESTUS made governor of Judea. Felix is accused at Rome.

Paul appeals to the emperor. Makes his speech before Agrippa, (Acts xxvi.,) and is put on shipboard to be sent to Rome. Is shipwrecked at Malta.

Festus finds the country overrun with robbers. A false Messiah is taken and slain. Agrippa at Jerusalem builds a high apartment in the palace of Herod, by which he can overlook all that is done in the temple. The Jews build a high wall on the west side of the temple, to intercept his view. The case is submitted to Nero. Nero allows the wall to stand.

63. Festus dies in Judea, and ALBINUS made his successor.

64. Martyrdom of James the Less at Jerusalem. According to Josephus he was stoned.

64. Herod's temple at Jerusalem is completed and about 18,000 workmen are discharged from employment, many of whom become robbers.

65. GRASSUS FLORUS made procurator of Judea,—a man worse than any of his predecessors. He was cruel, tyrannical, and insatiably avaricious.

Josephus says that at that time there were 3,000,000 Jews in Jerusalem.

Rome set on fire, probably by order of Nero. He charges it on the Christians, several of whom are put to death by being enclosed in pitch, and set on fire to illuminate the gardens of the emperor.

66. Beginning of the Jewish war.

The year usually mentioned as that of the martyrdom of Paul and Peter at Rome.

An edict of the emperor is issued, by which the Syrian and Greek inhabitants of Cæsarea are raised above the Jews. The dissatisfaction which this occasioned is the first cause of the war. The Syrians and Greeks at Cæsarea sacrifice birds on the

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

bottom of an earthen vessel, in order to irritate the Jews. A tumult is excited. Florus demands seventeen Talents from the temple for the use of the emperor. The Jews are exasperated, and take possession of the lower city. They attack the castle of Antonia, and take it after two days.

The Christians in Jerusalem, seeing that a war is about to break out, retire to Pella, beyond Jordan, in the kingdom of Agrippa.

67. Vespasian is appointed by Nero to prosecute the Jewish war. Comes to Antioch, and forms a numerous army. Division in Jerusalem, and general revolt in Judea. Titus, the son of Vespasian, is sent to Alexandria, to collect an army and to proceed to Palestine in aid of his father. Vespasian subdues Galilee.

Josephus besieged in Jotapata. Jotapata taken, and Josephus surrenders to Vespasian.

The Zealots in Jerusalem seize the temple, and depose Theophilus from being High Priest, and put Phannias in his place. They send for the Idumeans to aid them.

68. Vespasian takes all the places of strength in Judea, around Jerusalem. Nero dies. Galba succeeds him.

69. Josephus set at liberty.

Eleaser, son of Simon, forms a third party, and makes himself master of the inner temple.

Galba dies. Otho declared emperor. Otho dies. Vitellius proclaimed emperor by the German legions. Vespasian proclaimed by the army in the east. Vespasian secures the throne.

70. Titus marches against Jerusalem to besiege it. Approaches it some days before the passover.

The factions in Jerusalem at first unite against the Romans, but afterwards divide again.

The Romans make a wall all round Jerusalem to reduce it to famine.

July 17. The perpetual daily sacrifice ceases.

A Roman soldier sets the temple on fire, notwithstanding the orders of Titus to the contrary.

71. Titus demolishes the temple to its foundation, and also the city, reserving the towers of Hippicus, Phazeel, and Mariamne.

Titus returns to Rome, to his father, Vespasian. A triumph decreed them, and the arch erected in Rome, which is still standing.

The Jewish war ended. Bassus sent into Judea as lieutenant, and Judea is subdued.

# SCRIPTURE

## WEIGHTS, MEASURES, AND MONEY.

### I.

#### *Scriptural Measures of Length reduced to English Measure.*

										Feet.	Inches.	
A Digit (Jer. lii. 21.) .....										0	0·912	
4	A Palm (Exod. xxv. 25.) .....									0	3·648	
12	3	A Span (Exod. xxviii. 16.) .....								0	10·944	
24	6	2	A Cubit (Gen. vi. 15.) .....							1	9·888	
96	24	8	2	A Fathom (Acts xxvii. 28.) .....						7	3·552	
144	36	12	6	1·5	Ezekiel's Reed (Ezek. xl. 3.).....						10	11·328
192	48	16	8	2	1·3	An Arabian Pole.....					14	7·104
1920	480	160	80	20	13·3	10	A Schenus, or measuring Line..				145	11·04

### II.

#### *The Long Scripture Measures.*

					Miles.	Paces.	Feet.		
A Cubit.....					0	0	1·824		
400	A Stadium, or Furlong (Luke xxiv. 13.) .....				0	145	4·6		
2000	5	A Sabbath Day's Journey (Acts i. 12.).....			0	729	3·0		
4000	10	2	An Eastern Mile (Matt. v. 41.).....		1	403	1·0		
12000	30	6	3	A Parasang.....			4	153	3·0
96000	240	48	24	8	A Day's Journey..		33	172	4·0

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